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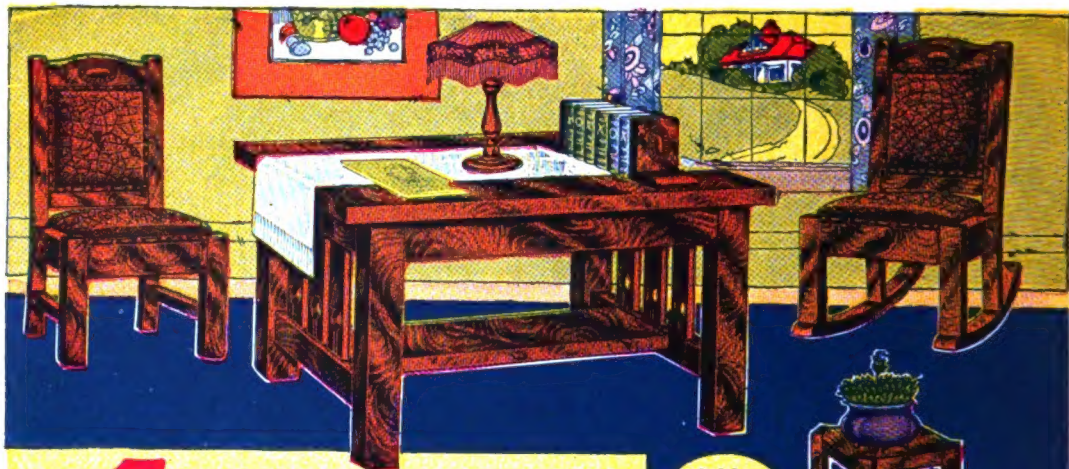
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George Jean Nathan
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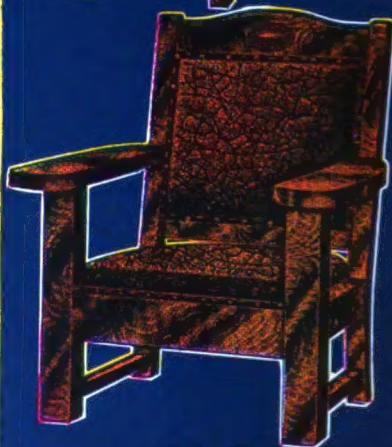
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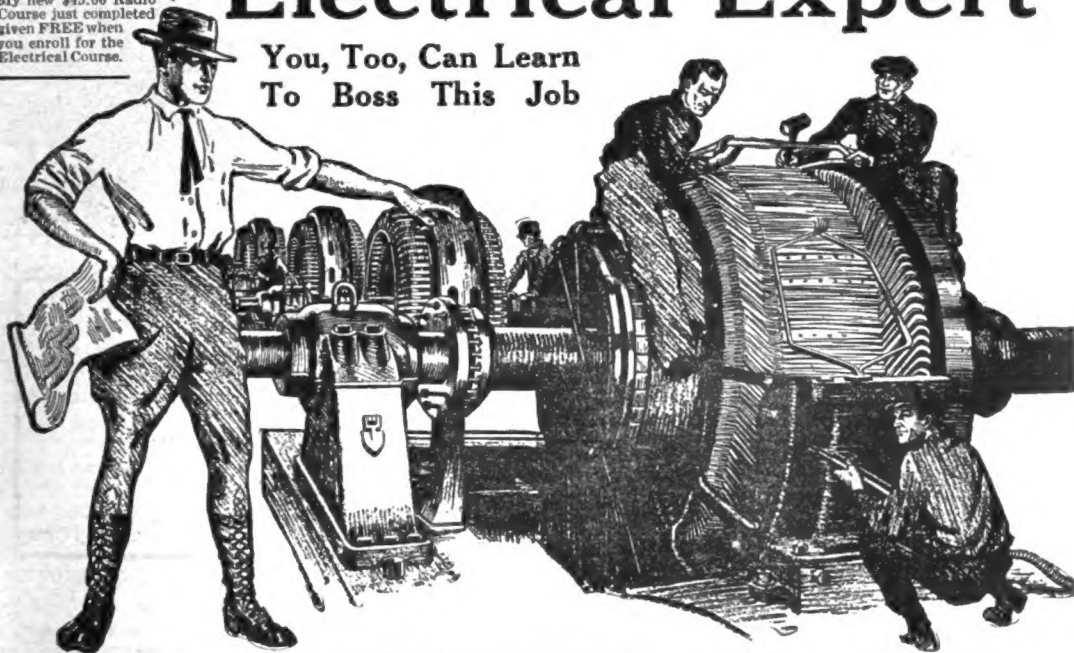
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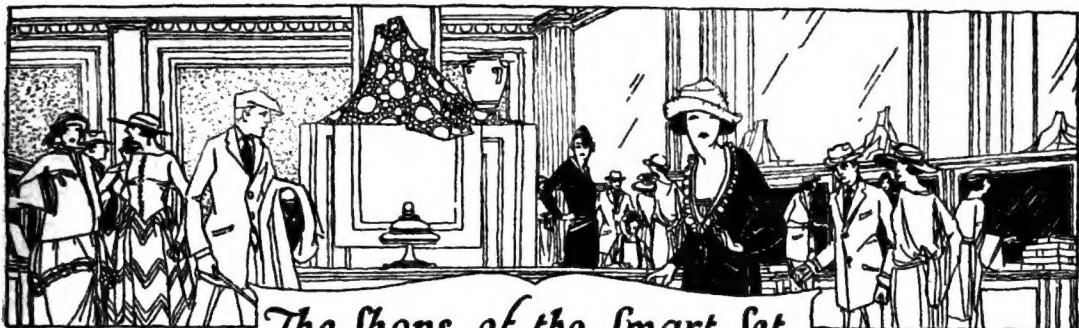
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The Apotheosis of John Smith

By F. Gregory Hartswick

AS John Smith went down for the third time the events of his past life, in the orthodox manner, flashed through his brain. He was still striking out feebly, but the effort was directed by a subconscious instinctive desire to live rather than by any process of his conscious mind, which was entirely concerned with the series of pictures projected on his mental retina. He saw:

Himself getting out of bed, eating, going to school, playing a little baseball with his gang, eating, going to the movies, returning to his home and going to bed.

Himself getting out of bed, eating, making an eight-thirty lecture, playing a little baseball with his class team, eating, going to the movies, returning to his dormitory and going to bed.

Himself getting out of bed, eating, catching the subway to the office, playing a little tennis with the boys, eating, going to the movies, returning to his furnished room in umpty-steenth street and going to bed.

Himself getting out of bed, eating, kissing his wife, catching the 7:37 to the office, playing a little croquet with the youngsters, eating, going to the movies, returning to his half of a two-family house in an unfashionable suburb and going to bed.

Himself getting out of bed, eating, calling goodbye upstairs to his wife's room, catching the 8:48 to the office, playing a little golf with his partner, eating, going to the movies, returning to his house in a fashionable suburb and going to bed.

"Oh, very well," said John Smith, and went down and stayed down.

The Great Lovers

By Dashiell Hammett

NOW that the meek and the humble have inherited the earth and it were arrogance to look down upon any man—the apologetic being the mode in lives—I should like to go monthly to some hidden gallery and, behind drawn curtains, burn perfumed candles before the images of:

Joachim Murat, King of Naples, who mourned, “Ah, the poor people! They are ignorant of the misfortune they are about to suffer. They do not know that I am going away.”

The Earl of Chatham, who said, “My lord, I am sure I can save the country and no one else can.”

Louis XIV of France, who perhaps said, “*L’etat c’est moi*,” and who, upon receiving news of the battle of Ramillies, cried, “God has then forgotten all that I have done for Him!”

William Rufus, who held that if he had duties toward God, God also had duties toward him.

Prince Metternich, who wrote in his diary, “Fain’s memoirs of the year 1813 are worth reading—they contain my history as well as Napoleon’s”; and who said of his daughter, “She is very like my mother; therefore possesses some of my charm.”

Joseph II of Austria, who said, “If I wish to walk with my equals, then I must go to the Capuchin crypt.”

Charles IV of Spain, who, playing in a quartet, ignored a three-bar pause which occurred in his part; and upon being told of his mistake by Olivieri, laid

down his bow in amazement, protesting, “The king never waits for anyone!”

The Prince of Kaunitz Rietberg, whose highest praise was, “Even I could not have done it better”; and who said, “Heaven takes a hundred years to form a great genius for the generation of an empire, after which it rests a hundred years. This makes me tremble for the Austrian monarchy after my death.”

Virginicchia Oldoni, Countess of Castiglione, who kissed the baby, saying, “When he is grown up you will tell him that the first kiss he ever received was given him by the most beautiful woman of the century.”

The Lord Brougham, who paid for his dinner with a cheque, explaining to his companions, “I have plenty of money, but, don’t you see, the host may prefer my signature to the money.”

Paul of Russia, who had his horse given fifty strokes, exclaiming, “There, that is for having stumbled with the emperor!”

And Thomas Hart Benton, who, when his publishers consulted him concerning the number of copies of his book, *Thirty Years’ View*, to be printed, replied, “Sir, you can ascertain from the last census how many persons there are in the United States who can read, sir”; and who refused to speak against Calhoun when he was ill, saying, “When God Almighty lays His hands on a man, Benton takes his off!” . . .



The Best of the Lot

[*A Complete Short Novel*]

By Ruth Suckow

(*Author of "Just Him and Her," "The Wanderers," "A Pilgrim and a Stranger," etc.*)

CHAPTER I

THE Robinsons had a farm six miles out of Sylvania.

It was a small farm, only a hundred acres and not well located at that. The pasture was half slough and the buildings were not worth much. Hod Robinson wasn't much of a farmer. He had low, unpainted, shed-like barns and there was a big mass of trampled yellow ears around his cribs. The house—a small ramshackle frame house painted a dingy green—stood in a yard bare of all but little weedy spears of grass and littered over with chicken feathers and old trodden brown corn cobs. The shaggy underbrush of the willow grove on the north was full of broken-down farm implements, rusted wheels, old cultivator seats, dead chickens torn into a mangled fluff by the dogs, crockery half buried in the dirt. There was a dingy-looking washing on the line. Children were about the yard, in dark blue calico dresses showing black panties, with their stockings down, staring. There was always and eternally a baby.

People said with a snort of good-humored contempt: "Oh . . . Hod Robinson!" They were all thrifty around Sylvania. They didn't have much use for the kind of farmer who let the weeds get ahead of him. There was nothing bad, when you came right down to it, about Hod Robinson. It was just that he cared more for hanging around than for working. When he ought to have been cultivating his corn, he went into town, did a few little errands here and there, then stopped

in at the restaurant where others of his kind sat talking in the front room while the young toughs of Sylvania played billiards in the backroom. There was no making a farm pay that way.

Hod was behind with his crops, behind with his bills. There was only one time in the year when you could look for him and expect him to be there. That was when the G. A. R. and the children marched out to the cemetery on Decoration Day. Hod was one of the Old Soldiers, along with Ezra Taylor, Arlie Mack, and Old Man Sanborn. Now it seemed strange to think that when he was a boy of sixteen he had run away and joined the army. It gave him pride to think of the four years when he had fought and killed and suffered. But after that he was through. He could never seem to do much. Hod's brothers said of him: "He ain't never been the same since that wound he got in the army." He suffered with a kind of rheumatism. It would seem to "get him," now in the back, now right in the hip joint. Well, the relatives said tolerantly, you couldn't expect so much of a man when he had a thing like that to contend with.

Hod had married one of the Gillespie girls from Edesburg. Jane, the oldest, had married a Parkins; and Ril had married one of those Houselots, who was well-to-do. The Gillespies were old settlers. Matie, Hod's wife, was the best-tempered and sweetest of the three. She had had all kinds of beaux in Edesburg. But she was not a strong woman. She was not the wife for Hod. He needed someone like Jane, who would have kept him at it.

The work on the farm took all of Mrs. Robinson's strength. It seemed as if she could never get out of the kitchen. Back and forth, from the cook stove to the big sagging table. Always with a little worried frown between her eyebrows, and a driven look. In a dark percale dress with a gray apron, her hair piled up hastily and askew.

It was a task to keep track of their children. All light-haired, half of them seemingly of the same size. Frank, Clif, Jennie, Flossie, Artie, Nellie, Charlie—and there had been others in between whom they had “lost.” The two breded like animals, without volition or knowledge, of any kind, not wanting more, but accepting the warning of another with a worried sense of fatality. Every so often there was a new one—and then Jennie looked after it. Her mother had little time or strength to welcome them as they came, but Jennie always did. She loved each one as if there had been none before it, and with an intensity of care that was a kind of protest against the whole way of things. She would murmur: “*Jennie* loves you. *Jennie* ’ll look after you,” reproachfully. “*Won’t* she?” Sometimes the aunts said, vaguely but with meaning, that “*Jennie* seemed to realize.”

The older boys were already a disappointment. Frank was not so bad. He would help on the farm a great deal, although he wasn’t what you’d call steady. But Clif Robinson was already a byword. He was one of that gang who drove in buggies down the roads at night, whipping their horses and whooping when they went through town. There was a girl out in the country who had “got into trouble,” and it was whispered that Clif Robinson was “the one.” Hod could not pretend to do anything with Clif, although he stormed and made great threats. Mrs. Robinson could do less. She did not even try. But she used to cry silently, as she worked in the kitchen, the tears trickling off her face onto the rough shirts that she hastily slapped with the heavy flatiron. Jennie would press her moth-

er’s head against her firm little face and stand silently comforting.

People said what a shame it was that the boys were like that. Matie could take no comfort with them. What if the little ones should turn out the same way! My, if the others had been a little more like Jennie! They said that Jennie was the best of the lot. It wasn’t only that she was such a good little thing to help, from the very start; Jennie was bright, too. When she was nine years old, she could get up a meal, wash the dishes, and look after the children, so Aunt Jane always said, as well as her mother could. If she could just have a chance, her teacher in the country school said, Jennie would get ahead of any of them. But she had to be out so much, helping at home. Her mother depended so upon Jennie. As if she had given up after the failure with the older boys, she left the little ones to Jennie. Jennie was more mother to those young ones than Matie was, Aunt Jane declared in disapproval. Even as it was, Jennie managed to keep up with the rest of the school, which was composed almost wholly of Robinsons, Mutchlers and Deutmeyers.

Jennie was a funny, old-fashioned little thing. She was small for her age. She had a sober little face, with thick light-brown hair pulled back from her round, smooth polished forehead, a sprinkle of freckles across her snub nose. The neighbors in the country said that they had never seen Jennie when she didn’t have a baby in her arms and a lot of children trailing after her. When the Robinsons took a rare outing—went to Sanders’ Grove to the Fourth of July celebration—Jennie couldn’t take a step without those children after her. She had to divide the bricks of sticky pink popcorn among them, wipe their faces and noses, make dashes after them to keep them from suddenly running under the wheels of a buggy or getting out of sight under the speaker’s stand. Jim Bartholomew had once or twice asked Jennie to go with him; but he said that he didn’t care to take a dozen. Jennie had little funny grave admonish-

ing ways with the children. "No. Jennie says no. Nellie knows better." She took great pains with their hair and hands. But she did not neglect her own. Jennie was always neat.

But although she loved each one as it came, Jennie cared most for the last one. Charlie was her baby. He was a dear little fellow then, brighter, more like Jennie. Jennie's affection for the others was dutiful and grandmotherly. But she adored Charlie. She would sit out at night on the old wagon box in the willow grove, holding him carefully to her little hard childish breast, rocking back and forth and singing in a faint, hoarse, tuneless voice. She would put him to bed in the dark, hot bedroom and stop to look at him a moment as he lay asleep, at the blond lashes spraying out from the closed eyelids upon the plump pale baby cheeks. The one window had a screen of bulging mosquito netting. The moths beat softly against it; and there was a faint murmur from the willows in the hot night.

CHAPTER II

THE Robinson boys had never amounted to anything in school. Frank was slack and had no ambition, gave up a thing if he couldn't understand it immediately. Clif had trouble with every teacher until he finally quit school. It was queer how different Jennie was. Jennie was always called a good scholar. She worked hard and eagerly at her lessons in the short and incalculable times that she could find. Mandy Mutchler, a scrawny red-haired girl with two big protruding front teeth, sometimes got ahead of her in school. No one would have believed the cold hatred that filled Jennie for that Mandy. And Mandy had a mean way with her. All the Mutchlers sided with Mandy against the Robinsons. After school they would taunt: "Can't spell 'receive'! Had to take her seat!" Jennie would say with immense dignity to her flock, and a motion as if pulling them away from contamination: "We'll go home the other way. We don't want to have to pass people lie that."

What hurt Jennie most was that if she had had any time at all for her lessons, Mandy never could have come near her. Mandy Mutchler wasn't smart. It was only that the rest of them in school were so "dumb." The Deutmeyers never knew anything. The other little Robinsons—Flossie, Nellie and Artie—were not bright like Jennie. She could not depend upon Flossie to uphold the honor of the family. That was why Jennie longed to shine. She was her family's champion. She passionately desired to have the Robinsons stand higher than the Mutchlers. And then to have to sit and look stupid over some easy little thing that she could have learned in a moment, if she had not had to do the ironing and help get supper and look after Charlie!

When Miss Marvin was teacher at the Sanders' Grove school, she saw how it was. She would always explain the examples that Jennie hadn't had time to work out, in the recess hour. She would say: "Well, that's all right, Jennie. You understand them. We'll just let it go at that. You needn't hand in any paper." Jennie was good in grammar and Miss Marvin was proud of her. She gave Jennie a teacher's examination and passed her with a grade of 95. Miss Marvin had had one year at Wesley, the little Methodist Academy near Sylvania, and she was saving her money to go back and get her diploma. She was eager to persuade Jennie to go, too. Miss Marvin, even then, had the missionary spirit. Jennie burned to go. Wesley, as Miss Marvin told her of it, was the culmination of her hopes. In dreams, she saw herself going there and then sending all the rest of the children.

But some of the other teachers were different. Miss Bessinger, for instance. Miss Bessinger was a plump, good-looking girl with an uncertain temper. Somehow, she never liked Jennie. She would say, in that sarcastic little way: "Well, Jennie, I don't think you could have studied your lesson *very* hard, did you?" Jennie's eyes burned with quick, sensitive tears, but she looked down and said nothing. Mandy brought

bunches of cowslips and shooting stars to Miss Bessinger. The Mutchlers all "made over" her. They would wait for her, and the moment that she came out of the schoolhouse would make a dash for her, seizing wildly different parts of her anatomy and shouting: "I got this hand!" "I'm going to hold this one!" "Well, I got this finger!"—and darting looks of triumph at the Robinsons. They would squeeze her violently, lay their cheeks with wild affection against her arm. Jennie viewed such proceedings with disdain. She was a dignified little body. She wasn't going to palaver like that if Miss Bessinger never liked her; and she would not let Flossie or Nellie do it, either. Miss Bessinger favored the Mutchlers and Miss Marvin had favored the Robinsons.

It worried Jennie to fall behind in her school work. Once or twice in the night her mother heard little stifled sobs from the tiny upstairs room with the sloping ceiling where the girls slept. She pulled her tired, patient body out of her own sagging bed, from beside Hod sleeping heavily and hearing nothing, and creaked up the dark, steep stairway between its two close walls. She looked into the room, with her habitual worried frown, until little sniffs, smothered in the pillow, guided her. She whispered uncertainly: "Jennie, is that you? Are you sick?" Jennie, suddenly little and childlike in her plain, coarse white nightdress, burrowed into the pillow, quivering all over.

It was not like Jennie to make a fuss. But her mother's worried, uneasy questions finally got it out of her. She told it in little sobbing whispers: She hadn't time to get her lessons. Miss Bessinger had scolded her. Everyone would think that she was "dumb," like Teresa Deutmeyer. Her mother heard her in troubled, helpless amazement. She said: "Well, Jennie . . . seems like there ain't ever time around here for those things. If they wasn't always so much to do. . . . Well, Flossie'll have to do some of it. I know it ain't fair to you, Jennie. Flossie'll have to do it

tomorrow and let you get your examples."

Jennie gave a desperate little gulp. She knew that Flossie would never do anything. Flossie and Nellie were awake, staring with round eyes bright in the dimness. "What's the matter with Jennie, ma?" they demanded, awe-struck. Their mother whispered sharply: "You go back to sleep. You don't always need to be hearing everything." She sat on the side of the bed, holding Jennie's hand, not knowing what to do—her wad of hair pulled sideways off her anxious face, one bare foot touching another on the chilly floor. Jennie saw her and became instantly composed again. "Go back to bed, mama," she said consolingly, in the grave manner she used to the children.

Jennie had a good mind. Knowledge, even the geography and grammar of the country school, was food to her. Sometimes, walking home from school down the country road between the goldenrod, she thought of what she wanted to do. She wanted to be a teacher; and then to be a nurse. To have a beautiful home, countless children . . . how she would train them, what they would all grow up to be. . . . But no matter how many children she had, she thought loyally, Charlie would always be her boy, just the same.

But these ambitions for herself always merged with her constant fierce desire to better the condition of the family. Jennie was the only one, who, as people said, "seemed to see." The only one who was not content to let things go slackly and at haphazard. The condition of the house hurt her—the small, gloomy, uneven rooms with their constant litter of the boys' things; the paper peeling off the walls and leaving patches of stained plaster; the dismal bare floors. It was useless to tell her father and the boys not to throw down their hats and old dirty overalls wherever they happened to be. She would go silently about after them, "picking up," making things look as decent as she could. The relatives always said

with amazement that they "didn't know where Jennie got it."

She noticed how other people did things. She saw the bare, dingy farmyard, smelling of poultry, fodder and the sty, and she yearned to make it like the yard of the old Henderson place with the evergreen grove and the flower beds neatly outlined with bricks. It hurt her to see Aunt Ril's house in Edesburg and then to think of how little her mother had. She would teach and earn money so that she could fix up the house the way it ought to be. She pictured her mother, "dressed up," sitting by the window doing fancy work . . . new curtains and plants in all the windows. . . . She wanted her to have a black silk dress, like Aunt Ril's.

But most of her plans were for the children. Very early, almost before she was in her teens, she began to think of what Flossie and Nellie would have to have to look as well as other little girls. She was careful, as her mother never thought of being, to keep them away from children who were not "nice" for them to play with—for instance, the "Groundhogs," as they were called, who moved into that little shanty in the woods and came to the country school for a while. Jennie wanted to do things for the Groundhogs; she longed to wash their dirty little paws and comb out their hair "for once"; but she warned Flossie and Artie not to play with them. She was ambitious for her flock. She made them study their lessons. She said severely: "Mamma, don't you believe her?" when Flossie whined and declared that she was too sick to go to school. She was not going to have them grow up like the Mutchlers and Deutmeyers.

And she had happy times with them too. Life had its mishaps and occasional storms with the Robinsons; but things were too lax to be tragic. The children played house in the willow grove, using the broken implements and dishes to great advantage. They kept guinea pigs, doves, generations of black and white kittens, a tumultuous panting dog called Shep. They could run about

as they pleased, as long as Jennie was with them. She would take them into the woods in Sander's Grove. They would spend whole hours there, in the green leafy dimness, where they could just hear the sounds from the road. They picked wildflowers, wild gooseberries, raspberries and chokecherries, May apples and butternuts. The grass was long and fine, marked with the faint shiny tracks of wagon wheels. They lay on their backs and watched the leaves move against the blue sky.

But the burden was all upon Jennie. Her mother was already bent and wounded by her troubles—Hod's shiftlessness, Clif's escapades which kept her in a constant shadow of dread that made her nervous and trembling. When Jennie was fourteen, she had to leave the country school. Her mother could not get along without her any longer. They needed help. Jennie must earn a little by working for prosperous farmers' wives in threshing time. She must go to Aunt Jane for a few weeks, and then to Aunt Ril, coming home without wages but with old clothes to be made over for the children. Her mother and father would have let things go that way—Jennie working here and there until some farm hand married her and the old poverty and helplessness began over again. Jennie braced herself against it.

CHAPTER III

A FEW years later the Robinsons moved into town.

Jennie was the one who had urged it. She had seen that they would never get along as they were. Poor Hod could hardly pretend to do the farm work. Doc Zimmerli had told him a long while ago that it wasn't good for him and that he ought to get into something else. But he was stubborn about it, and hard to get started. He waited until the thing got so bad that he simply had to do something.

Now was their chance to make the change if they were ever going to. Frank was twenty-two now. He was

"shining around" Bertha Deutmeyer and had settled down a good deal in the last year. He finally admitted to Jennie that he wouldn't mind it if the family did go into town and leave the farm to him. Clif could stay and help him run it. He could pay rent to his father. Maybe he'd want to own the farm some day. "Him and Bertha" would probably be married soon, the relatives said.

As Mrs. Robinson told it to Aunt Ril, "Jennie kept after Hod about it until she finally got him started." He fumed and fretted, demanded querulously to know what he was going to do in town so big that it would be any better than what he was doing now. "Yes, town, town, town," he would mutter angrily. "Seems to think just bein' in town 'sall that's necessary." Jennie would not give up. She saw clearly that they would be better off than they were now. There were easy jobs that her father could get where he wouldn't be out in the weather so much. There was more work there and she could help them more than she was doing now. When the boys got a little older they could get jobs too. The work in the farmhouse was too hard for her mother. If they could find some nice little house, where the work would be easy and where they could have a garden. . . . The children could go to town school. Finally she heard that Art Stille wanted a man to help around the lumber yard. She persuaded Hod to go in and ask Art for the job.

Those first few months in town were hard ones for the Robinsons. They had not left the farm much and they knew few people in Sylvania. It was hard to get a place to live. There was nothing that they could rent except "the upstairs" at Eli Washburn's. Then they missed even the poor old house on the farm. They couldn't keep chickens or have a garden. Old Eli Washburn was always coming upstairs to see that they weren't marring his precious walls and floors. Mrs. Washburn complained about the children. Jennie had to keep watching them to see that they didn't

run over the grass or the flower beds. They got to playing on the street with children of whom Jennie was very dubious. Artie, especially. She was always finding him down by the tracks and hanging around freight cars.

Mrs. Robinson was worried about what "she" was thinking. She was not used to living in another woman's house. She would say anxiously to Jennie: "Will she let me hang this washing out? You go down and ask her. I don't like to." They would have had to get out long before they did if the old lady hadn't happened to take a liking to Jennie. Jennie always came quickly to make amends if the children got to shouting or ran too near the pansies. Mrs. Washburn saw approvingly that Jennie was a worker. She would tell other women about it when they came to sit in her parlor talking and gossiping. "Oh, that little thing's a worker, all right. She's the only one of 'em that is."

One of the chief difficulties was in keeping Hod contented. He had never worked for anyone but himself for years, and he "found out," just as his neighbors out in Sander's Grove had predicted that he would. He couldn't do things just when and how he happened to want to. He and Art didn't get along at all. Art wanted to get as much as he could out of him and pay him as little as possible. It was doubtful from day to day whether Hod would go back, and whether Art would keep him if he did.

And then there was trouble on the farm. Frank drove in early one morning and announced that Clif hadn't been seen for three days. Where had he gone? Who knew!—Frank demanded angrily. He'd done the chores and his share of the milking—Frank might have known there was something wrong when he did that—and then simply walked off without a word to anyone. They all tried to tell Frank that Clif had simply gone to Adamsville or somewhere and would be back in a few days. But Frank didn't think so. They couldn't get him to say what made him

say so, but he insisted that Clif was gone for good.

He was pale with anger. Of course Clif had chosen to go when he was right in the midst of everything! His mother tried to soothe and placate him, and to make allowances for Clif. She assured him, although her eyes were frightened and her hands trembled: "He'll be back. You know we've thought he'd run off before, and then he'd come back." Frank said he'd have to come back mighty soon if he wanted *Frank* to take him back. He added a string of epithets that made Mrs. Robinson say: "Frankie! Now, please . . .", and made Jennie finally say sternly: "We've heard enough." One of their old neighbors who drove in told Hod that everyone had heard the boys quarreling.

Jennie felt the responsibility. It was she who had got them into town. Now she must look after them. She must bring things out right. Her mother was sick with dread of what Clif was doing, her father might quit or lose his job any day. Jennie did not say a word to anyone, but she was quietly looking out for something. One day she announced that Mrs. Guthorsen had hired her to help in the hotel for the rest of the summer. She could go home at night but she would get her meals there.

There was building going on that summer and Mrs. Guthorsen had the whole gang of carpenters at the hotel for meals. It was no easy job to cook and wash dishes for them. It was one of those boiling hot summers. Jennie flew about the dining-room, in a dark blue percale dress that somehow always managed to look neat, little beads of perspiration on her smooth childish face, her brown hair still pulled back from her rounded temples but a few damp strands curling from the heat, her face flushed. Mrs. Guthorsen said that she had never had such good help. The men all liked her, although they hadn't much to say to her. One of the young carpenters used to ask her to go buggy-riding that summer. He was from

Edesburg. Aunt Jane and Aunt Ril asked: "What about this young Sibley and Jennie?" But Mrs. Robinson said that Jennie was funny that way. Sometimes she'd go with him and sometimes she wouldn't. She didn't think Jennie cared much about him. Jennie was all wrapped up in the children.

The children were to start into school that fall in Sylvania. Jennie worked and planned to have them ready. She stopped in at Schwigart's store and bought gingham for dresses for Flossie and Nellie. She usually had two or three hours off in the afternoon, and then she could get the dresses cut out and fitted so that her mother could do the stitching. When she came home at night she could make the buttonholes and do the finishing. She resolutely corraled Flossie and Nellie so that she could try on while she was at home. She made some shirts for Artie, and blouses with enormous ruffled sailor collars for Charlie, such as all the little boys were wearing.

She was as excited about the first day of school as the children. She was up early so that she could get all four of them ready. She had a basin of water and a pink celluloid comb, and she made Flossie and Nellie sit down on cushions in front of her while she drew the wet comb through their light hair, plastering it down in damp sand-colored strands with two fiercely tight pigtails. Artie's hair she plastered too. But she made a little damp roll of Charlie's, like a sausage on the top of his head, divided into tiny wet strands by the teeth of the comb. She had him wear a white ruffled blouse.

They were proud and strutted until they came within sight of the big red schoolhouse. Then they began to grow bashful at the sight of that magnificence compared to the little white frame Sander's Grove school. They remembered that they were from the country. The little girls hung their plastered heads and wanted Jennie to go in with them. Jennie was firm. They were big girls. She stayed at the foot of the long wooden stairway and watched them mount to

their own rooms. But she took Charlie into the First Grade room and told the teacher to look after him. She was proud of the way he acted—looking around at the colored paper leaves around the blackboard, calling out in his little high voice: “Jennie, what’s them things? What’s them over there?” Not a bit afraid!

Jennie waited until the teacher gave him a seat, in the front row, and she saw him proudly seated there with his new tablet in the desk and his pencil box in front of him. She lingered, murmuring wistfully: “You’re all right now, aren’t you, Charlie? See all the little boys and girls.” He paid no attention to her, but looked with great interest about the room. He wouldn’t even listen when she kept repeating: “Jennie’s going now, Charlie. You’ll be all right.”

“Oh, he’s too interested in all this to notice you,” the teacher said gaily.

Jennie went down the long boardwalk to the street blind with tears. She was exalted and yet fearful at the thought of the big building with its businesslike air, the high rooms with their arched windows and blackboards. “The little darling,” she kept whispering. Before, she had been afraid that Charlie would not want her to go and would cry when she tried to leave him. Now, in spite of her pride, she felt a kind of gnawing disappointment. He had not even seemed to notice. When she got back to the hotel her eyes showed that she had been crying, so that Mrs. Guthorsen looked at her kindly but with curiosity, and asked: “Well . . . get them all started?”

It was all the worse when the children came home full of “teacher,” the other children, their new schoolbooks, lessons. For the first time Jennie was not their leader. Nellie said to her curiously: “You only went to country school, didn’t you?” She felt without authority before them. She burned with a sense of her own deficiencies. She would not keep on working at Mrs. Guthorsen’s; she would have her schooling somehow.

But she was glad she had got this for the children. They would not grow up like Clif and Frank. Now they were in town. She must make the venture a success. Do things for all of them. . . . Mamma must have a little house of her own. Better work for papa. She must not stop, must go ahead. . . . It would all work out. She would *make* it.

CHAPTER IV

ALONG in September, Jennie had a letter from Clif. It was sent from Storm Lake and written in pencil on yellow scratch paper—a queer shamefaced note, asking her to tell ma that he was all right and that he and another fellow were in Storm Lake together. He had a job that suited him better than working on the farm. He said he didn’t think Frank would miss him much! That was all, but enough to relieve and content Mrs. Robinson. She said timidly: “Well, I guess he’s all right then. Don’t you think he is, Jennie? If he hadn’t been, he wouldn’t uv written.”

That was the beginning of better times.

Hod had left the lumber yard some time ago, but a sudden inexplicable spurt of energy decided him to rent one side of the produce house and open up a little trade in butter, eggs and cream. He liked this. The other old fellows hung around there with him. He could talk and dilly-dally about all day, and still be making a little. He could wear his old clothes. It really suited him a great deal better than farming. He would say proudly: “Of course, I don’t depend on what I make at this. I just do it to kinda keep me busy. The boy pays rent on the farm.”

And then old Grandpa Gillespie, who lived with Aunt Jane in Edesburg, died and left Mrs. Robinson a small legacy. Jennie persuaded her to put it into a home. They couldn’t keep on living the way they were doing. There was a little house down by the railroad tracks that was now vacant. It had a good big lot and plenty of room for a

garden. There were already some bushes planted, and they could set out other things. It would be a home. Jennie was looking ahead. She wanted to get her family settled. Otherwise she could see how it would be—a drifting old age, no place that they could call their own. . . . Jennie exulted in the little house when they moved in. She did the painting and papering all herself. She wandered about the big backyard that sloped down to the pastures along the track, thinking what plants she could set out in the spring. Her mother, in a burst of recklessness, bought a new carpet for the parlor. Jennie helped lay it—a tan with arabesques of red—and told her father where the stoves must go.

Everything was turning out beautifully. Frank was getting along and paying the rent, Clif was found, the children were all in school. She thought: "Well, I've got everyone fixed for a while."

But Jennie herself was not satisfied. Things were not the same as they had been on the farm. There was so much time. The work at the hotel was slack during the winter months. The traveling men went on to Adamsville for the night if they could, and as Mrs. Guthornsen said, there was "not much of anybody else." For a time that winter Jennie was simply at home "helping her ma," Aunt Jane and Aunt Ril told people in Edesburg who asked about the Robinsons. That seemed to them the proper and natural place for a girl of Jennie's age. They hoped she wouldn't go out to work again, but would stay right at home "helping" until she was married. And then they could have her once in a while to help out.

That was what her mother said too. Jennie was such a comfort to her. She liked to have Jennie at home. "Oh, why can't you just settle down for a while? You've worked hard," she urged. She couldn't see where Jennie got all her ambition. She would have enjoyed having Jennie with her always, to plan and talk with, to sit with her when she did

sewing or mending. She liked to have someone whom she could ask: "Shall we have pie or cake for over Sunday?" Someone to whom she could turn and say: "Who was that just going down the street? Do you suppose that's that girl that's visiting Lawrences'?"

She couldn't see why Jennie wasn't satisfied. It wasn't like last year. They were getting along. Jennie tried to tell her that they must look ahead. That they mustn't count too much on Frank. "Well, in the summer you can work for Mrs. Guthornsen again," Mrs. Robinson said. She was lonely. This was the first chance that she had had since her marriage to just sit and talk with anyone. It was almost like being with "the girls," her sisters, again.

Jennie noticed most of all the difference with the children. On the farm, the minute that school was over, she had had them right at her heels. Now they had other children. Flossie and Nellie always went somewhere to play after school. Artie never appeared until supper was half over—and then red with cold, snowy, frowsy. Artie was a weak child, without Clif's wildness but with hints of his proclivities. Jennie worried about him. He went with bigger boys to coast down the steep hill south of town. He'd break his neck there some day, his father said testily. Then he'd be satisfied.

Even Charlie had a boon companion—little Harry Freitag, the Lutheran minister's son. They sat in front of the hard coal burner in the dining-room, close to the fire like cats, on the zinc mat with its tiny sprinkling of gray ashes, coloring the gardens and flowers in the seed catalogue. Charlie and Harry were two of a kind. They would have been content to color or "cut out" by the hour. But Jennie had to watch that Charlie didn't get all the best pictures for himself.

Jennie was no longer necessary to their games. She could see that Flossie and Nellie were coming to look upon her merely as an elder sister, someone who could wash dishes and let them run off to play. Artie never seemed to think

of her at all. Charlie still loved her, when Max wasn't there for him to play with.

Jennie was not satisfied. She knew that their present prosperity was precarious. And her own old ambitions were stirring. She did not say much about it, but she was thinking constantly of what she could do. She was not contented to live on this way. This was only the beginning.

She took a place clerking in Schwigart's store that winter. She had had some notion of saving her wages, but as soon as she had money it seemed that it was always wanted for something. The children—especially Flossie—wheedled nickels and dimes out of her. And Jennie herself would see that they needed things. She would buy them new hats and shoes out of her wages. She could not bear to see them go shabbily dressed. But, although she made a very sober, polite, conscientious little clerk, she did not like it. She meant to get into something else.

In the spring, Aunt Ril was sick again—or thought she was. No one knew just what to think of Aunt Ril's sicknesses. But of course she sent post haste for Jennie, and Jennie had to go. She found Aunt Ril in bed, moaning and complaining that she was not long for this world. She "took on terrible," Uncle Hiram Houselot told Jennie in an awed whisper. "I'm awful glad you've come," he said solemnly. "Your Aunt Ril's delicate. She needs someone with her."

Aunt Ril, the only prosperous one of the three sisters, needed always the most attention. Circumstances had put a firm stop to Mrs. Robinson's natural clinging weakness, but in Aunt Ril it was well developed. She was never spoken of by herself or her husband except in terms of the most intense pity. She cheered up the day after Jennie arrived, and came down to sit complacently in her rocking chair and watch Jennie do her spring housework. "It's an awful good thing you came," Uncle Hiram told Jennie solemnly again.

And then it was Aunt Jane who wanted her. Of course Aunt Ril made a fuss, complained piteously that Jane was "strong as a horse" and did not need Jennie. Jennie was glad that she had promised Mrs. Guthornsen to go back to the hotel in the summer. Otherwise she could never have got away. It did not occur to either of the aunts to offer her wages; they were angry that she would not stay; both declared that Jennie was not so nice and obliging as she used to be, that town had spoiled her. "Oh, you'll get married one of these days, Jennie. You're a nice-looking girl. What are you in such a stew to go to work for?" Aunt Jane asked her.

Jennie worked again for Mrs. Guthornsen. But she was dissatisfied that summer. It seemed to her that she was getting nowhere. Working here and there, staying at home, going to Edesburg whenever they wanted her . . . that seemed to be all that she could do.

The carpenters were back. But the one who used to take Jennie buggy-riding was not with them. It was reported that he had "gone and got married" during the winter. "You see, Mrs. Robinson said, vaguely reproachful. Her thought was that Jennie could have had him if she had wanted to and hadn't been so stand-offish; and that since Jennie hadn't wanted him, it was no more than she deserved that he should look immediately for someone else. . . . Not that Mrs. Robinson wanted Jennie to be married. Not while she was depending upon her so.

CHAPTER V

JENNIE was going home from the hotel for an hour or so one afternoon when she saw someone coming who looked familiar. In a moment she thought: "Miss Marvin!" That was certainly Miss Marvin's face—a heavy freckled face with coarse black hair, light blue eyes that were physically weak but intelligent behind the big convex bubbles of her gold-rimmed spectacles, and a big ugly mouth with prominent teeth.

The face was exactly the same, but Miss Marvin's figure—always short and frail, although large-boned—had grown heavier.

Jennie came toward her smiling shyly, a pink flush on her round cheeks. If Miss Marvin had not recognized her, she would never have spoken but would have gone straight on. But her smile deepened and her eyelashes lifted when Miss Marvin approached. Miss Marvin looked, started to go on, and then stopped and exclaimed:

"Why! Jennie Robinson! What are you doing in Sylvania?"

Jennie laughed with pleasure. She was both shy and proud at Miss Marvin's cordiality. She did not tell very much about herself, but stood listening while Miss Marvin poured out a stream of hurried explanations—that she had been graduated from the Academy at Wesley and had been teaching at Rudd, and that in five months she was going to sail for Asia Minor as a missionary. She held Jennie's hand as she spoke, and kept nervously tightening and loosening her hold on the small calloused palm. Every so often she would stop, say: "And what are you going to do, Jennie?" and then go hurriedly on. Jennie did not know whether Miss Marvin really heard and comprehended what she told her or not. But as Miss Marvin left her, she called back several times: "Now come and see me. Be sure, Jennie."

That meeting brought all the old ambitions back. Jennie was thinking, planning, feverishly as she went on home. If she could go to Wesley . . . how could she? . . . but she had a vague feeling that Miss Marvin could help her. A few nights later, she put on her neatly laundered blue lawn dress, brushed back her brown hair until it shone and went to see Miss Marvin.

At first she sat silent and embarrassed. She did not know how to get the words out. But Miss Marvin did not have so much to say about her own plans tonight. She was tired and quiet. Finally Jennie managed to say: "Miss Marvin, do you think I could ever go

to Wesley?" Then she told everything—about their moving into Sylvania, her plans for all of them, some of her fears. Her lips quivered and she looked away when she had to tell Miss Marvin how she had quit the country school. She asked tremulously whether she could ever make up the work she had lost and enter the Academy, even if . . . well, if she could find a way of getting there.

Miss Marvin was intensely sympathetic. She had always had the missionary spirit and had acquired more of it at Wesley. She declared that Jennie should and would go. Of course she could make up the work! She would not need to have had "the regular things" to enter. Miss Marvin would help her. She could come every evening and they would work together. Miss Marvin would write to Miss Withrow at the Academy, and to President Weatherbee. Jennie faltered out something about money, but Miss Marvin declared that that "would all work out."

Jennie went home elated, fired with hope and ambition. She would work—there would be no limit to how she would work. Plans for getting money went feverishly about in her head half the night, while Flossie pulled at the sheet and whimpered petulantly: "Well, Jen-nie!" Uncle Hiram . . . he could lend her something, of course, but she knew that he would not. He would get her off in a corner and say in a sorrowful, confidential tone that he and Aunt Ril had talked it over and they didn't think. . . . But she could work for board and room. Miss Marvin had said that she could. Then, if she could only get two hundred dollars. . . . There was a little left from what Grandpa Gillespie had given them. Could she get her mother, without her father knowing it. . . . She would save every cent that she made at the hotel this summer.

After that she went two evenings a week to Miss Marvin's. Miss Marvin had told her to trust that the financial part of it would "work out," and she was doing it. It was a narrow white house with a tall, gloomy pine tree grow-

ing beside it and a chill New England air, standing next to a wide pasture at the end of a cross street. They sat together in the dining-room while Miss Marvin's parents—two stout heavy silent people, known as "great Methodists"—were beyond in the sitting-room. It was sultry and close in the narrow room. Jennie had to come straight from the hotel, and she always got there breathless. Perspiration made tiny beads at the roots of her light-brown hair and curled the damp tendrils. She had hot cheeks.

She could not fail Miss Marvin. She slaved over her lessons all summer, ruining her eyes and making herself feel cross and languid. It was all against opposition. Her mother did not "see why she needed to go." She could not see why they would all be better off later, as Jennie told her. Aunt Jane and Aunt Ril called it "that crazy notion of Jennie's." Aunt Jane said: "Oh, yes, they all think they have to run to *Wesley* nowadays!" She told how "this Hutchins girl", in Edesburg, "had had to go so big"; and she was going to give music lessons; and then she had come back and married "one of those Schlitters." That's where *her* music had gone. Poor old Hod fumed helplessly about it. Yes, of course, Jennie had to trot off and leave them. That's the way all those children of his had done. He cited Clif, and made Mrs. Robinson say, in fearful reproof: "Pa, now!" Not a one of them understood why Jennie should want to go.

Jennie shed tears, but she did not give up. Jennie was tenacious. Miss Marvin was excited by her difficulties and resolved that she should go. "That family simply preyed upon Jennie," she told her mother indignantly. She wrote to a boarding house in Wesley and obtained a place for Jennie.

But toward the end of the summer, the opposition all died out. The Robinsons were a lax and fatalistic tribe, with the exception of Jennie. They began to see that it was to be. And although they did not understand how they were to get along without Jennie

right at hand, they began to think that they could not help it.

Mrs. Robinson even complied with Jennie's request for money, although she looked so scared and reluctant that Jennie declared she didn't need it. She had seventy dollars saved up from her work at the store and the hotel. That would take her there, pay the twelve dollars' tuition for the first term, and more. She determined that she would not let herself have expenses. After that, they would see. She would try it anyway. And if she could not have a year, at least she would have a term. She was going.

CHAPTER VI

WESLEY ACADEMY was a great institution to the small surrounding towns—Sylvania, Edesburg, Syracuse, West Junction and Rudd. None of these towns gave more than two year courses in their High Schools, and the elite and the ambitious went to Wesley to "finish up" and to receive instruction in the arts of music and china painting. It was considered a great feather in the cap of the Methodists to have Wesley. It was boasted that fully twenty per cent of the young Presbyterians and Congregationalists who went there could be counted upon to "turn Methodist." None of the other denominations had a school close by except the little Presbyterian college at Corydon; and its head, a retired Presbyterian minister, had "cooked its goose" so far as the Congregationalists were concerned by violently denouncing the sermons of the Reverend Toogood at Adamsville as "pernicious doctrine."

The Academy's greatest drawing card with the thrifty farmers of Adams County was its cheapness. Tuition for the three terms was only fifty dollars. Board and room was three dollars and a half a week. Wesley was only four stations from Sylvania. The "scholars" could go home over Saturday and Sunday and have their washings done. Wesley was a mere village. There was not much to "take their money" there. The

"influences" were supposed to be good. The requirements were low. The Academy catered to farm boys and girls who had to leave school, as Jennie had. They could take one, two, three or four year courses, in which it was boasted that "religion was not neglected." The Academy stood in high repute in that region. Farmers declared indignantly, when they heard of some banker's daughter going to Mt. Hope or Bradford, that "you could get just as much at Wesley as you could anywheres else, and for half the money."

There were others going from Sylvania when Jennie went. There were various youths; and the two English girls, Dot and Aurelia, were on the train, and Mabelle Woodson. These all sat together and indulged in high-pitched laughter and pop corn. Jennie did not speak to them. She sat shyly back near the rear of the car, watching the rolling pastures with the white limestone cropping out through the dry September grass, and the full leafy trees along the edges of the creeks.

Jennie was wearing her summer hat—a sailor shape with a stiff bow of ribbon. Dot Woodside had a new red plaid dress with enormous sleeves and a leather belt around her miraculously tiny waist. A felt hat with a red feather was set upon her thick dark curls. She was laughing and talking with the Bronson boy. Jennie looked at her in awe. Then an earnest feeling came over her that made her clench her hands and set her little teeth. She was going to Wesley!

Those were the days when Wesley was flourishing. The little town of four hundred people, with its small frame houses and big trees, set among wooded hills with deep ravines close by, was brought to life during the winter months by an influx of two hundred "scholars." They were young people from the villages and from the country—big-boned, awkward farm boys with shocks of hair and red faces, who were studying for the ministry; a group of earnest and generally ill-favored ones who were

going to Turkey as missionaries; and then the cream of youthful Sylvania and Syracuse, pretty girls who studied a little music, English and china painting and went home "educated."

Jennie was awed by her first sight of the Academy—two red brick buildings with wooden belfries, already of an academic elderliness. There was no campus. The buildings were set at haphazard, and a little precariously, on the sloping hilly ground that in spring was covered with wildflowers. One of them had a great iron bell that clanged loudly every morning at eight, every noon at twelve and one, and again at four. The inhabitants of Wesley timed all happenings by this bell and listened for it anxiously, noting the smallest deviation from its usual loudness and number of strokes. "Just after the bell had quit ringing." "A little before time for the bell." "What was the matter with the bell this morning? Wasn't it a little off?"

Jennie had to go in to register. The building had stone steps and wooden floors, the narrow boards worn into little polished hillocks around the nails. There was a dusty schoolhouse smell. A middle-aged woman with stringy hair and a severe haggard face took Jennie's name and "assigned" her. She was Miss McFadden, President Weatherbee's assistant and a state officer of the Epworth League. Jennie was impressed, but she did not shuffle her feet or grow scarlet, like the raw boys who came in for the first time. Jennie always had a sedate little way with her.

She found the house where she was to work for her room and board—a rambling white house built as haphazardly as the little town, which had not even as much plan in the laying out of its streets as Sylvania. Jennie began duty that very night in the dining-room, a large old-fashioned room with a painted wainscoting, bare except for a sideboard and two long narrow tables set out sepulchrally with heavy white sugar bowls, spoon holders, vinegar cruets and catsup bottles. One of the tables was devoted to new "scholars,"

rigidly bashful boys and a few girls, who bent low over the table and ate doggedly, indulging in furtive throat clearings and requests to "Please pass ketchup." But those at the other table were all "second year." They laughed and joked uproariously, made more assured by the presence of the new ones, and one youth with a long irregular nose and a crest of oily hair was wildly facetious. They called him "Hank." He tried to "have fun" with Jennie, but he could not bring a smile to her sober, industrious, homesick little face.

After that Jennie devoted herself to the New Table. She would not reply to Hank's sallies, would not come near the table when he called her "little one," stood sedately unsmiling while he shouted: "Hey, little one, drive the cow down this way!" or tried to spill water on one of the girl's new silk waist. She waited on the crowd of bashful new "scholars," pouring water, filling bread plates, asking them to take second helpings. She was rendingly homesick at first. Tears burned her eyelids, but she gave no sign of them, then, or while she was "hustling with the dishes" in the steamy kitchen. Never until she was alone.

She had a room upstairs with a girl named Norma Ball. It had a pine dresser and two trunks and was heated by a pipe that came through from the dining-room. Norma was a short, fat, whiney girl, repulsive in some intangible way, who immediately began to depend entirely upon Jennie—to be called in the morning, to be told what to wear, to have her Latin translated and her algebra problems "worked," while she paid for these favors by telling poor sleepy Jennie, at night, long tales of some youth or other—"at home" always—who had said this and that to her, taken her to socials, or wanted to take her to socials, and some other girl wouldn't let him. . . . Norma was "delicate." When the burden of lessons weighed upon her too heavily she stayed in bed and let Jennie wait upon her.

But Jennie liked her landlady, Mrs.

Allweather—a fat, perspiring woman, wheezing asthmatically as she worked, mellowed by fifteen years of experience with the charms and vagaries of the "scholars." She declared at once, like Mrs. Guthornsen, that she had never had help like little Jennie Robinson. She took a motherly interest in her, eagerly hoping that someone would "take a fancy to her," as they would all do if they had any sense. She declared that Norma needed nothing so much as a good beating, and that Hank ought to be told a few things. "Get right after them," she urged Jennie. Mr. Allweather, a small daintily built man, was a clerk in "the store." Mrs. Allweather confided to Jennie that she had urged Robbie to get into something where he could make a little more. But Robbie was satisfied. He was not an ill-tempered man, but he was curious. At the store, he heard everything. He loved to sit on the porch at night with Jennie and Norma and gossip about the boarders.

Jennie's work was hard at first. She felt the deficiencies of her training. But she worked doggedly, just as she had done when she was going to the country school, snatching moments before the boarders came noisily in, putting up a screen between her bed and the complaining Norma to shield her from the lamp. For the first month she was in despair. But after that, all her teachers had good reports of Jennie. "Look at how hard little Jennie Robinson has to work," they said, "but you never see *her* behind in her lessons." Especially the great Miss Withrow. She was the one of whom Miss Marvin had spoken with such awe. It was justified.

Miss Withrow was a character. She was credited with having "made" the English Department at Wesley, which was respected even by the larger colleges of Mt. Hope and Bradford. The Academy took an awed pride in Miss Withrow. She managed President Weatherbee with a heavy hand. She was rumored to have degrees and titles from Eastern colleges. She was a remarkable woman to have at a little

school like Wesley, and people uneasily realized it. With her training, knowledge and ability, she might have "gone anywhere," if she had not been handicapped by her ugliness and unconquerable personal uncouthness. Indeed if it had not been for that Miss Withrow would have been upon the lecture platform. Students listened in absolute silence to her discourses upon the historical plays of Shakespeare! The debaters were trained within an inch of their lives. They boldly and exultantly challenged the theological seminary at Mt. Hope and came off with the honors. They had a bonfire in Wesley that night.

But Miss Withrow was gaspingly, terrifyingly ugly. The little first year girls in her classes could not keep their horrified gaze from her. She had an enormous dark-skinned, pock-marked face with black hairs above the upper lip and queer stiff, gray hair. Her clothes were never together and always covered with spots. She wore men's shoes and a man's hat. Students who saw her for the first time gasped: "What's that," when they saw her tramping down the street. This amazing being at once saw "timber"—her favorite expression—in Jennie, when Jennie made a scared but scrupulous report upon the character of Katherine in "Henry VIII." After that there was no danger of Jennie not "keeping up." Miss Withrow took her in charge. She thought that she could make a real teacher out of Jennie.

Jennie worked harder than ever, with a fierce persistence, to live up to the expectations of Miss Withrow. She had lived on the farm so long and known so few people outside her own absorbing family that it was hard for her to get acquainted. She had always regarded Wesley with such respect that she was shy of the Academy girls. The requirements of dress were not severe in Wesley. But even there, Jennie, with her smooth-backed hair and plain neat dresses that were too long for her, was old-fashioned and quaintly countrified. For the first few months she enjoyed no social favors whatever. She went

with Norma and Mrs. Allweather to the debates. She went straight upstairs to study in the evenings. She regarded the "couples," the famous and prominent ones rumored to be engaged, like Tom Ferguson and Aurelia English, with shy interest.

She did not know that she was working hard. She had always had more than she could do. She was up at six helping Mrs. Allweather with the breakfast, putting the heavy dishes of oatmeal and the milk pitchers on the tables. She ate a bite and rushed off to class after breakfast. She had classes all morning. Then she came running back across lots to wait on the tables, washing the breakfast and dinner dishes "in one," making the beds and cleaning up for Mrs. Allweather. Mrs. Allweather did not serve meals over Sunday. Almost all of the "scholars" went home on Friday nights. Jennie always did. She found her mother complaining of how she had missed her. She did most of the family mending, helped with the girls' sewing, did her own washing, straightened things out generally.

But gradually she began to be accustomed to the place and to care for it. When she went back to Sylvania she could talk of nothing but Wesley. She began to love the little irregular wooded town with the two red buildings of the Academy rising in the background. And people began to like Jennie. Her sedate, dependable personality, spiced with a quaint childishness and naïve quality, began to appeal. She did not detest even Hank so much now, although she withdrew with dignity from his pawings and pokings. He began to make much of Jennie, in his own peculiar way—singling her out for favor by teasing her, pulling at her tidy club of braided hair, hurrying to walk to classes with her, declaring at the table that he had seen her walking with President Weatherbee and winking at old Leander Cop, the janitor. Even the girls at the Old Table were gracious to her. Dot English sat in the seat beside her when they went back to Sylvania. At the

New Table, there was a tall, ungainly fledgling minister from the country near Syracuse, with the inappropriate name of Byron. He took Jennie for embarrassed silent walks and buggy rides. She had a shy liking for him.

In the spring the wildflowers were out in the ravines near Wesley; and in the brief April evenings she went out with the other girls, leaving the dishes at Mrs. Allweather's motherly command, to find the wake-robins with their three white petals among the mould and the old leaves, and delicate pink anemones swaying on their fine dark glossy stems. The girls went running from nest to nest of blossoms, calling to each other in long-drawn cries of delight, to "Come here!" and "Look!" . . .

One evening, Byron came out on the porch where Jennie was standing and asked her to go down to the ravines with them. There were others there, in the nearer hollow where violets grew, but Jennie and Byron wandered on to the farther one where cowslips and bloodroots grew close to the banks of a little dark bright stream. There were giant trilliums. Byron looked eagerly to find all he could for Jennie. They stayed until it was almost dark, and very chilly, in the hollow there.

Byron wrapped his coat awkwardly around Jennie's shoulders. She was touched and elated by this unusual chivalry, but she made him take it back when they had climbed up the steep side of the ravine, he helping her. They walked back in a curious exaltation through the clear pale twilight. There was some couple in the lawn swing beside the syringa bushes on the lawn—a lighter and darker blur in the dusk, a murmur of voices faintly audible. Jennie and Byron walked sedately by them, but Jennie was tense with some strange new feeling. Byron awkwardly handed her all the flowers when they reached the steps. He stood there a moment.

"Well," he said, with a queer sigh, "I guess you'll be back next year."

CHAPTER VII

BEFORE school was out that spring, Miss Withrow curtly summoned Jennie into her classroom—a gloomy high-ceilinged room with arched windows and shelves of the Temple Edition of Shakespeare. "Want to talk to you," she said. She announced briefly that she saw "timber" in Jennie and wanted her back next year. Without seeming to ask questions—sitting back, grim and ugly, in a straight chair beside her desk—her little eyes light-gray in her huge dark ponderous face—she yet seemed to draw all the information out of Jennie that she wanted. In the midst of Jennie's timid recital of the family finances, she suddenly broke in: "Are you a Methodist?" Jennie started and answered faintly: "No, ma'am." "Um-hm!" Miss Withrow answered enigmatically. There was a touch of grim humor about her thick lips as she pursed them comically together and looked at Jennie from under her heavy eyebrows. "You've taken hold well this year. Like it?" she informed Jennie gruffly at the end of the interview.

Early in the summer, Jennie had a letter from her, brief and characteristic, announcing that she had told the Board, since they confined their scholarships to Methodists, that they would have to give Jennie Robinson some work in the office. Therefore Miss Withrow would expect Jennie back on the fifth of September. Jennie looked with awe at the signature, written in a singularly small and delicate hand: "Mariana V. Withrow."

Jennie's heart was in a silent ecstasy. She was going back!

Until now she had been uncertain. She had not let herself hope. Now it seemed that she could hardly live through the summer until September came. She had taken her old place at the hotel, but after Mrs. Allweather's boarding house, she could not take much interest in the long table surrounded by the section men in overalls and blue shirts who bent low and shoveled in the food without a word, in the low

crowded dining-room with its worn brownish linoleum. There was an occasional traveling man, usually fat with a large oily face and thick soft hands, who leaned toward her and said confidentially and pleadingly: "Say, sister, that piece pie you gave me was an awful good sample."

It seemed to her that she did not see much of the children this summer. Flossie and Nellie were getting to be big girls and "going with the boys." Charlie spent all of his waking hours with Harry. They were working on some mysterious invention in the Freitags' barn. Artie she worried about. Sometimes she asked her mother if she did not think that Artie was away from home a great deal, and if he ought to be so much with that Peterson boy. But she was too absorbed in other things, and he was too big now for her to look after him as she had always done.

Jennie spent more time on herself than she had ever done. Her mother declared that she had changed. About every three weeks she got a letter from Byron, very stiff and formal, beginning: "Friend Jennie" and ending: "Well, I will conclude now." Jennie would have nothing to do with the men who were eating at the hotel that summer. But as she sat sewing in her off hours, she would remember the April evening in the ravine. Her cheeks would suddenly grow rosy, her eyes have an intent inward look. Sometimes she would allow herself brief thrilling dreams of next year.

She had friends outside her own family. She had never had much opportunity or inclination for them before. Aurelia English had gone to the Lake with Tom Ferguson's family. Dot was lonely. She came over in the evening and made Jennie go over to the school yard where they sat on the wide, cool, stone steps of the school building and talked about the Academy. Dot could not make up her mind about several of the Academy boys, all of whom were writing to her and hinting that they'd like to see what Sylvania looked like in the summer. Dot said she'd like to have

them all down at once and give the old hens a treat. She discussed the different virtues and deficiencies of Bill, Herbert, Fish and Clarence; and confided various amorous adventures to Jennie.

Jennie made a wonderful listener. She was composed, sedate, trustworthy, and at the same time showed a flattering, childlike interest in what she heard. She did not listen with a little stifled, spiteful feeling of envy, like Mabelle Woodson. All the time that Dot was murmuring interesting things her heart was warm with the secret thought of Byron and that last beautiful evening when they found the trilliums. That gave her the right to listen to Dot's confidences without humility. She too had something to tell, although she would never tell it. She loved those hours on the steps in the great shadow of the brick building, the wide grassy school yard spreading out under the tall dark trees and Dot's low voice. . . .

Sometimes she would plan for the rest of them, as she used to do. When she had got to teaching and had a salary, she would do things. She could not afford a piano, but she could get an organ and the girls could take lessons, perhaps Charlie, too. Flossie would never want to go to the Academy, but the others might. She would put them all through.

In spite of Miss Withrow's letter, it seemed too good to be true that she was going back, with everything settled. She would not have to scheme and plan to get along without asking her mother for money. She might even afford a new winter coat. But it was too easy, too wonderful. Plans were always uncertain with the Robinsons. When people would ask: "Jennie going back to the Academy next year?" the answer would be a vague: "Oh, I guess . . . maybe . . ." As she was working over her clothes in her few spare moments, Jennie would have a strange, helpless, fateful sense that something would happen to keep her from going, something "at the last."

It was late in the summer, in August. Jennie could never forget the

day, the feeling of the weather . . . that dry burning August noon, cobwebs clinging to the little cedar tree in the side yard, the railway track stretching away blindingly bright to the sky that was gray-blue with a dusty haze . . . Artie was brought home that day. He and some other boys had been trying to bum their way to Adamsville on a freight train. Artie had got frightened when he saw one of the train men and had jumped off into a little hollow hard with cinders. Both legs were broken and he was injured internally.

Jennie always afterward had the image of that moment, at the same time confused and deadly clear . . . of herself reaching up to put away the dishes in the cupboard in the hotel kitchen, and then Mr. Guthornsen coming to the door and saying in a queer embarrassed voice: "Jennie . . . I guess they want you at home." He would not tell her what the matter was, more than to hint, still with a terrible embarrassment, that he "guessed one of the boys had got hurt." Jennie put away the last of the dishes and untied her apron with a trembling silent self-possession. She went home the back way, through a pasture and across the tracks. Some stern grip of self-control kept her from running, made her walk steadily on. . . . She kept thinking in terror: "Charlie, Charlie . . ." She could make nothing of the house, standing silent, enigmatic, in the burning August sunshine, the windows telling nothing, the hot light blazing on the iron pump at the side, in front of the house the doctor's buggy. . . .

The scared family were all waiting for Jennie. She had to do everything. Flossie went about trembling and ready to flee for fear that she would have to look at Artie. Poor old Hod Robinson wandered from room to room, into the bedroom where he stared piteously at Artie, out into the kitchen. . . . As the doctor said disgustedly, he was no good; completely helpless.

Mrs. Robinson was prostrated. It was as if all her old tormenting fears for Clif had come to pass at last after

she had almost given up fearing them. She talked a steady, low, agonized stream—of how Artie had got to running with the Peterson boy, of how they had kept hanging around the tracks and the freight cars, of how they had stolen ice-cream from the Methodist church social, of how someone had told her that there was talk of their having gone to that little house down by the old slaughter ground—a queer confused medley. She would catch hold of the doctor's coat with her convulsive feverish hand, try to hold him and tell him these things. . . .

Jennie was the only one who stayed all day in the little hot downstairs bedroom, cluttered and crowded with the big pine bedstead, the dresser, the commode with its heavy brown and white pitcher and wash bowl, the green shade half-way down but letting in little sharp pinpricks of light . . . the anguished childish face at which no one but Jennie dared to look. Artie lived until six o'clock that evening.

Jennie felt a strong bitterness when she saw how the family were buoyed up by the excitement and importance that lasted for a while. In spite of the fact that the boy had been killed while "in bad company," and while doing "what he shouldn't," the funeral was held in the church. There were so many who wanted to come because of the dramatic horror of the accident. People said they were driving in from Rudd and Syracuse and all around.

Flossie and Nellie felt this, as they sat in the front pew of the church. It consoled them for being so terrifyingly close to "the casket." Hod felt it, as he saw the eyes upon him and tried to sit straight, in his black Sunday suit. Frank had brought Bertha and all the children in from the country. Aunt Jane was funereally helpful and important, and Aunt Ril had had to have Uncle Hiram lead her out of the church. But Mrs. Robinson sat crushed, steadily and piteously weeping under the big black veil of stiff cottony chiffon that Aunt Jane had fastened upon her hat.

Jennie's face, under her plain summer

hat with its bow of ribbon, was small, pinched and stony white. Jennie stared straight ahead of her. For a while people looked curiously at the Robinsons when they met them on the street, or turned their eyes self-consciously aside. The accident was in all the papers. Hod cherished a long and sensational account of it from the Dubuque paper. He grew to have a kind of pride in it. Then it slowly became a town story for old ladies to mull over in their parlors, telling with relish just how each one of the family took it, and for men in the depot and the restaurant to talk over with an intense desire to get all of the details exactly straight.

Women said in a tone of deep consolation to Mrs. Robinson: "You'll have Jennie with you next year, won't you? Oh, yes, you won't feel like having her go back now. She'll be such a comfort to you." Mrs. Robinson agreed with them. She even reproached Jennie, with some vague idea that if Jennie had never gone to Wesley the thing could not have happened. Jennie took the reproach. It was unreasonable, untrue, but then . . . It was true that Jennie had had thoughts for something besides the family that summer. Perhaps if she had devoted herself to them. . . .

She felt a terrible revulsion against all for which she had cared. She did not want to go back. She accepted her task in a spirit of fierce self-abnegation, of passionate loyalty to them all. Once she had felt impatience at her father's good-for-nothingness, her mother's anxious weakness, her brothers' carelessness. She had wanted to make them all better in spite of themselves. Now she wanted only to help and succor them. Her mother did not get over the horror of the accident. Sometimes that winter they feared that she was getting "queer." She brooded, wept and trembled; and she had no security except with Jennie.

But these feelings slowly wore away as the reality clarified itself out of the mist of emotion. In the bleak winter days, in the little dreary house down

by the tracks, with its ingrain carpets, stoves and scanty furniture, she had simply the sense of being too far from the Academy to ever reach it again. She heard little of it. Her letters from Byron had been in preparation for the next year. They dwindled away. Now she passed Dot English on the street, feeling like a stranger, wistful and coldly apart.

The old cramped need for money was back. Hod's rheumatism was bad. He was half crippled now; and they could all look ahead and see the time when he would be helpless. There were all the funeral expenses, with which Frank did not help at all, although Clif sent a soiled ten dollar bill from a town in western Iowa. Jennie raged helplessly under these conditions. They depended upon her. She felt that she must get something at once—and what would it be? She thought with hopeless longing for her year at Wesley, the work Miss Withrow would give her, the training which it would give her to help herself and all of them. What could she do now? But she could not go back.

The family needs fastened upon her more tightly than ever. The children were growing up. Flossie was a young girl suddenly. She was a "worry," as her mother piteously said. Pretty, foolish, utterly callous, leaving the work airily to Jennie and running out with this one and that one. Ray Thibadeau, a half dissolute young man of twenty-five who worked around the station, had taken her up. Jennie did not know which to fear most, that they would, or would not, be married. Flossie was flattered, proud, at the thought of having an "older fellow." That was all that she cared about. Nellie was thirteen, age enough in Sylvaina for "going with fellows." She was a little better than Flossie, but of small use at home.

Jennie's only pride was in Charlie. The old devotion returned and was concentrated upon him, with her sharp sorrow and gnawing remorse for Artie's death. Jennie was unconscious of the time when her hopes and dreams began

to let go of herself and turn toward Charlie.

CHAPTER VIII

THE Robinsons were having hard times again. Everything was going wrong at the same time. Frank had had losses and was able to pay only part of the rent at uncertain intervals. Hod was making so little at the butter and egg business that it scarcely counted. Charlie got a few lawns to mow and odd jobs here and there. Flossie actually went to work, during the berry season, for Mrs. Boutellier, the nursery man's wife. But things really depended upon Jennie.

The dramatic feeling over the accident had worn down into a dull aching sorrow that still gave her, at odd moments—when she looked out and saw the little cedar tree as she had seen it that day when she came home from the hotel—sudden, sharp, stabbing memories of Artie's face, his hands on the bedspread. . . . All the time the knowledge was with her that she must do something. They counted upon her. She told her mother so, gently. "Ma, I think I ought to be earning something." Her mother clung to her, would not see the need, did not want her to leave. If she had to do something—and Mrs. Robinson could not seem to understand that it was not mere restlessness that prompted Jennie—then she could go back to the hotel, or work again in Schwigart's, where she would never be far from home.

Jennie did not oppose her, but she was silently determined not to do either of these things. That would be going back, back into the old slough of helplessness and shiftlessness from which she had tried so valiantly to lift them all. That would mean no future for any of them. She remembered Miss Withrow, her own kindled ambitions. She could not do what she felt would be unworthy of Miss Withrow's belief in her. Teaching would seem to keep her a little closer to the Academy, of which she still thought in yearning unsatis-

fied moments. She would keep struggling.

School regulations were lax in those days. She could not get in at Sylvania, but she might get a place at Rudd, four miles away on the Illinois Central. She had heard that the teacher of the lower grades was leaving. Her sedate trustworthy manner, in her neat summer dress and prim two-years-old hat, made a good impression upon Mr. Ben Grapes, the President of the Rudd School Board. He said he thought that this one would be a worker, not flighty like the last one they'd had. He regarded the Academy at Wesley with immense respect and thought a year there ample preparation for teaching. Jennie got the place, as a letter with periods but only spasmodically scattered capital letters informed her. She was given the lower grades, with Miss Backus—a veteran of some twenty years' standing—teaching the upper ones. Miss Backus was a native of Rudd. Jennie stayed on weekdays with the Kurrelmeyers, an old German couple, with whom she had firmly struck a thrifty bargain. She went home every Friday night on "the Clipper" to Sylvania.

Rudd was just large enough to be an incorporated town—a long rutty street with side-roads, a bank, a hotel, two or three frame store buildings, sloppy frame houses where retired farmers lived and kept a few pigs and geese and chickens and raised grapes or strawberries. The social life centered wholly about the Lutheran church to which the German farmers drove from the farms close by. The school building was painted white, long, plain and narrow with a cupola and a belfry. At the side stood a row of evergreens. The grass was high in the yard.

Life went on, busy, anxious, a little dreary, filled with cares and work and yet seeming much at a standstill. There was the "over Sunday" at home, just as there had been when she was going to the Academy. Sewing for the family, her own mending, help with the washing and baking, struggles with

Flossie and Nellie, listening to troubles. She had dreams of saving, of perhaps going back to "finish" some day. The salary at Rudd was small. She thought of what she would have done for all of them if she had been able to get a better place. But when she got home, she always found that there was something to take her money. Her mother had to have her teeth out, her father was "trying doctoring" with a new doctor at Adamsville or Syracuse. Flossie had to have things. Nellie was "going to graduate." And of course there was Charlie. It was one of Jennie's few real indulgences to slip a little extra spending money, for the Carnival or the Fourth, to Charlie. Sometimes she could not resist a little surprise for her mother, cloth for a new dress or something for the house. She felt that she gave them so little. It hurt her to see them go without things. She would have liked to load them with presents.

Jennie was well liked at Rudd. She had a good firm hand with the children and the parents approved her industry. Some of her great-hearted kindness overflowed upon her "scholars." But most of it was absorbed by her family, whose needs and sorrows were always close to her, gnawing at her heart. Ed Hall, a mason, a widower with three small, light-haired children, was reported to "have some thoughts in that direction." Miss Robinson would make a good mother to those little ones, a woman said approvingly. Ed Hall asked Jennie to drive eight miles with him to a box social out at the Elk Township schoolhouse. He bought her a dish of ice cream at the Luther League social on the Grützmachers' lawn.

Jennie's heart was touched by Ed's efforts to keep the three children respectably dressed, washed and brushed. But she was a little shy of him, just as she had been of the young carpenter. Ed was a nice enough fellow, but that was all that could be said of him. Jennie was fastidious. Although she seldom consciously thought of him now, she had a memory of the serious, earnest Byron. And she did not have much

time to think of Ed Hall. On weekdays she was busy at the schoolhouse. On Saturdays and Sundays she was at home. Something was always happening there.

There was the something that she had feared. It was too soon yet for the women in town and the loafers at the restaurant to do more than suspect it. Even Mrs. Robinson was not sure. But she confided her fears to Jennie with moist eyes and a pitiful look that begged for reassurance. Before the thing got out, more than as a vague rumor, Ray Thibadeau and Flossie suddenly went to Adamsville one day on the three-ten and came home married. Only a few significant whispers that "people guessed it was about time" were left of what the gossips and loafers had been piously hoping would turn into a juicy scandal. But Ray and Flossie were anxious to get out of Sylvania—"nasty little burg," as Flossie savagely called it. Ray asked to be transferred, and after a few months was made station agent at Ryan.

The marriage had satisfied Mrs. Robinson. She forgot all her fears and only mourned because Flossie was going into a Catholic town, which she viewed with a mixture of awe and horror. When the baby was born in July, making people at Sylvania nod their heads wisely, Flossie called for Jennie. Jennie went over to Adamsville and took the freight from there to Ryan. It was a sultry, sticky day. The caboose, with its green-painted woodwork and long seats with the leather frayed along the edges, was stifling. The freight stopped at cornfields that, in the sudden silence after the bumping and grating, made a faint, dreary rustling.

Jennie looked out of the small dusty window and saw Ryan—a hot barren village with straggling houses and the incongruous note of a large brick cathedral. The train stopped, seemingly indefinitely, a half mile from the station and she got out and carried her heavy valise up the track to the depot. On each side of the track there were hollows in which grey tall armies of weeds, rank green and moist, from which a

little cloud of insects rose in the steamy air. Tin cans, torn paper labels, were scattered among them. The ties, brown with oil, were half sunk in black cinders. The dazzling rails narrowed until they met in the distance. The telephone wire sang. It seemed miles to the station. Jennie's heart ached with a hopeless desolation.

The maroon-colored building stood alone, treeless, with a long hot wooden platform. The waiting-room thrilled a little to the incessant click of the telegraph. The rusty iron stove was set in a trough that was littered with peanut shells and pink gum wrappers. Ray stuck his head out of the ticket window. His little office was breathless with heat. He was in his shirt sleeves with black sateen sleeve protectors. A long brownish lock of hair hung down over his face, sallow and oily with heat. He said briefly: "H'lo, Jennie. Gwan up. She's up there."

They had four rooms above the depot. Flossie was in the bedroom, lying on the rumpled bed, her hair disheveled, her body white and moist with heat, twisting and complaining. Jennie's throat ached with pity as she looked at her. She caressed Flossie's hair. Sometimes Flossie jerked away from her, sometimes she would not let Jennie out of her sight. She was sullen, resentful, at times with the bright terrified eyes of an animal. But she found alleviation in patronizing Jennie, in telling her: "You don't know what it means."

After that Jennie was always called to Flossie's when there was anything wrong—and there always was. The baby died, another was born. Ray had to leave Ryan and go to another town quite as desolate. Ray and Flossie quarreled. Flossie shrieked that she would leave him. At times Jennie was sent for simply to relieve the boredom of existence, to provide a listener for Flossie, who found dramatic interest in the pose of a burdened wife. Jennie mended and steadied the precarious marriage.

Nellie was neither so pretty nor so bad-tempered as Flossie. She had

grown up into a commonplace giggling girl who seemed to have no particular affections. She did not even cling to Jennie and querulously lean upon her as Flossie did. She coolly detached herself from her family. She was fairly good at home during the week, Mrs. Robinson reported, but as soon as Jennie came home she was off and no more to be seen. She was not an attractive girl. But a few weeks after her graduation from the High School, she married and went out to the country to live. Then, as Mrs. Robinson complained, she might never have seen any of them before so little did she seem to belong to them. She seldom came to town. She got thin, haggard at twenty—a young farm wife, worn, badly dressed, with sparse light hair that she frizzed on the iron when she came into Sylvania. She seemed to have nothing to say to them. Jennie begged her to "stay a day now and then with mama," who got nervous and lonely when Jennie was away. But Nellie could never seem to get in. There was no counting on her for anything.

Nor Frank. They went out to Frank's sometimes. Hod still kept up an important proprietary interest in the farm. He said that he must keep an eye upon it. Frank seemed to have given up all thought of buying it from sheer lack of persistence. He could have paid for it three times over, people said, if he had tried. The house still stood in the grassless littered yard. The buildings were more dingy. The place was acquiring a feeling of age. There was more debris in the willow grove and the trees were taller. There were children in the yard, heavy children with stolid, dirty faces, who needed their noses wiped, black panties hanging down perilously from under limp, dirty dresses. The weather-worn house still had traces of its old green paint. Frank was sullen and discouraged. Bertha had become gross and fat, with pop eyes and a little wad of oily hair.

The family had not heard from Clif since Artie's funeral. The Hansons reported having seen him in a town in

Nebraska. But they weren't sure, maybe it wasn't Clif, just someone who looked like him. . . .

Mrs. Robinson was still gentle and good, but weak, despondent, clinging. Jennie said she should have had a home like Aunt Ril's and someone who would have looked after her. Not that either of those things had kept Aunt Ril from being still more weak and complaining. Hod was getting more crippled all the time.

Jennie sometimes felt a sense of discouragement. She had tried to do so much for them. She worked and gave, and still they had nothing. But she could not give up her hopes. She let them center in Charlie. He was a big boy now, ready for High School. The vein of good sense and mentality that had surprisingly cropped up in Jennie was in Charlie too. He was the brightest boy in the Sylvania school. Great things were expected of Charlie Robinson. In spite of her reserve and dignity, Jennie could scarcely control the pride that she felt in Charlie. When he began to take part in "exercises" and debates in the High School, and she went to hear him, her face shone with an intense inward joy. And he was still her boy. He was the youngest, and he had always remained a little childlike. He still brought things to Jennie, talked over his lessons and essays and speeches with her, came to her with naïve faith when he wanted anything.

The best things that Jennie had were winter talks with Charlie—sitting close to the stove, Charlie awkward, boyish and earnest, Jennie listening with anxious loving eyes upon him. They planned his career over and over again. Whatever he wanted to do, Jennie would urge him: "Well, you can. You can, Charlie. A way will show." She sympathized with everything, but she tried quietly to keep him in a steady path. What he wanted to be most—what he had always said that he was going to be—was a great preacher. That was what Jennie wanted. With his gifts of speech, his ability to write . . . she had visions of him addressing great

crowds, swaying multitudes. . . . Sometimes he was discouraged. He said despondently: "Look at pa. Look at all our family. How can I ever expect to get anywhere?" Jennie steadily encouraged him. A way would open up. She would help him.

He believed her. It never occurred to him—she seemed so staid, a little old woman—that Jennie had ever wished to do anything on her own account. She was Jennie, his old Jen. . . . He would never have dreamed that his occasional caresses and his trust in her did not completely satisfy her.

But her old sorrow for her broken plans, her longing for the thing that she had almost had and missed, found an outlet in her determination that Charlie should have his chance. For that, she could keep working.

"Let's see," people calculated, "it must have been ten years, or somewhere around that, that Jennie Robinson began to teach there at Rudd."

CHAPTER IX

PEOPLE noticed now that poor Hod Robinson was failing. It was remarkable how long he'd managed to hang on. But he wouldn't last much longer. He took no interest now in the interminable discussions that went on in the produce house. He could not get out to the cemetery on Decoration Day until W. E. Sanborn remembered him and sent the carriage for him. He had to ride with Old Man Sanborn, who was very childish now, and who had been carefully placed, like an ancient fragile doll, in the back seat of the surrey. Hod had loved to march, hobbling along the hot road and suffering tortures with his lame hip. It had brought back the flavor of the days when he had amounted to something, and which he now saw in a heroic blaze of splendor. He had an obscure feeling that his place in the dwindling procession of Old Soldiers explained and condoned everything. People could say "Oh, Hod Robinson" all they were a mind to, but on Decoration Day they could remember

that he hadn't always been "Oh, Hod Robinson."

That ignominious ride to the cemetery hurt the old man more than all the many other failures of his life. Jennie might tell him how lovely it was to ride, and what an honor to have W. E. Sanborn ask him, but he could take no pride in it. He had wanted to march. That evening he sat out in a painted rocker on the porch, staring somberly at the road along which no teams ever passed, buried in unfathomable thoughts and recollections. The thirtieth of May was warm that year. The bridal wreath's sweetness had a sense of decay. It shed tiny white petals upon the thick grass.

It was reported about town that Hod "suffered something terrible; and people who had talked about how little he did for his family, were now uneasy at the thought that perhaps he had always been suffering. Once more he became an object of interest, as all the dying were in Sylvania—someone for whom neighbors could stop each other and say: "I hear Hod Robinson's pretty bad today. Doc Zimmerli's been there again." Jennie told him how many people inquired about him. But he said bitterly: "What do they want to know about me for? A lot they care about me." He had given up.

He was too much care for Mrs. Robinson; and although neighbors were always indignantly expecting Nellie to come in from the farm or one of "the sisters" to come from Edesburg, to help her out, they never did. "The sisters" drove over in state for dolorous calls and expected a good dinner before they went home. It all fell upon Jennie. No one could see just what they would do without what Jennie was earning. But she had to leave her school at Rudd and come home. Nellie did nothing. Flossie either, who was reported to be "somewhere in Dakota." Charlie was at the Academy that year. He was working his way, but the general opinion was that he should have given up school and "got to earning something." Jennie denied this indignantly when it

was hinted to her. They did not want Charlie to give up his education. She could take care of her parents until he was able to help her, she said proudly.

Hod's illness went by lingering stages. First, people noticed how difficult it was for him to get about; then he stopped trying to go to town and was only seen pottering around the yard or sitting on the porch; then he did not leave the house; and for what seemed the longest time of all, he was helpless and bed-ridden. Then Jennie came home. At last, after reports of his being "almost gone" and "a little better today" had been circulated for several days, he died. Jennie felt her chief pang of sorrow that he could not see the flag and the Old Soldiers at his funeral.

That was a bad year for Jennie. Her father's illness had cost a great deal, in spite of the fact that Doc Zimmerli didn't charge much to people who couldn't afford it, and said heartily: "Now, Jennie, don't worry about me. I can keep the misses from starving a while without that money. Take your time, my girl. You've got a lot on your shoulders." Mrs. Robinson said plaintively: "Well, then, why don't you let it go if he says you can and pay Hardman's first?" Jennie was indignant with her for a few moments because she did not understand that because he had been so good to them they should be all the more anxious to pay him. There had been things at the drug store; funeral expenses again; and now there was a family lot to buy and a tombstone. She was horrified to find what good tombstones cost. But she felt that she must have one. People in Sylvania set great store by their cemetery.

She must get to work immediately. Her place at Rudd was taken. School laws were stricter now. She could not get a new position as easily as she had got that one. But she managed to get the country school in Hazel Green Township two miles east of town. She went out to the farm one day and had a talk with Frank. She talked to him plainly, as she was not afraid to do with Frank—told him how little help he had

ever given them, how many times they had waited for the rent. Frank was sullen but Jennie insisted. It ended with his letting her have one of the horses, an ancient saddleback called Jess. She managed to pick up cheap a one-seated buggy from some people in town who were buying an automobile. Then she could drive back and forth to school every day except in very stormy weather.

All that year there was trouble going on in the Robinson family. Hod had died without leaving a will; and although they all knew that he had intended his wife to have the farm, the others claimed their share. Frank seemed to think that it was his because he had been living there. Everyone talked about it, wondered how it was coming out. They were indignant. They wanted Jennie and her mother to have it. Jennie was sick, worn to a shadow. She could not bear to quarrel with her family. For the first time she summoned Charlie home and appealed to him. He was furious at the others. He demanded that Jennie turn the whole thing over to W. E. Sanborn.

Finally it was settled. The others would have their share—Hod's "intention," as he explained, however just, would not stand in a court of law. Flossie in Dakota, Frank, Nellie, would inherit equally with Jennie. But he would do the best that he could for Mrs. Robinson. Frank would not stay if he could not have the farm, he declared. He would pull out and go to Dakota. "W. E. B." explained coolly that it was the best thing that could happen. There would be trouble as long as they held the farm. In his opinion the best thing to be done would be to hold a sale and realize on the property.

Frank had let even the buildings run to seed. But the land would yield well under a good farmer. Land was getting valuable now in Adams County. The farm was worth far more than when Hod had left it, indifferently as it had been handled. There was quite a crowd at the sale. It was a bleak November day. Jennie went out to make

coffee. The place haunted her with its memories of her work-ridden childhood. She had a queer, lonesome memory of old Shep and the cats. The willow grove was bare of leaves, thin and gray against a gloomy sky. The auctioneer's face was red with cold and the people shivered in the farm yard. But W. E. said that they did well with the sale. They got rid of the farm machinery and sold the house to Pete Claussen. He was going to move it onto his farm and make a granary and chicken house of it. W. E. had found a buyer for the place, a newcomer named Hundertmark.

It had sold for seventy-five dollars an acre. But after the division there would not be any too much left for Jennie and her mother. Nellie and her husband took their share with cool disregard of Hod's "intentions" that Nellie had heard him state a dozen times. Charlie was the only one of the children—all of whom, except himself and Jennie, were now "provided for"—who spoke of leaving his share to his mother. But Jennie would not let him do it. He was having a hard time making his way through college, and Jennie was not able to help him as she had always planned to do. He must use this to make his start. She fancied that Charlie agreed with a hint of relief. But he had made the offer. Oh, her boy was different from the others!

But Mrs. Robinson was getting all the time feebler and more nervous. She could not bear to be left alone even in the daytime now; and since they had a little money in the bank she did not see why Jennie should not stop teaching and stay with her. The money would last as long as *she* would want it—and she did not look beyond that. Jennie did not know what to do. They needed her little salary, as she saw plainly. But she was getting very weary of the grind of teaching, the long drives back and forth. Her heart ached when her mother reproached her. It could not be this way much longer.

Finally she gave up the school. Her mother could not be alone. She could help out a little by writing the *Sylvania*

Notes for the Adamsville Republican. And Charlie was getting started now. He would help them out if they needed it.

CHAPTER X

SYLVANIA was a quiet country town of about six hundred people, at least half of whom seemed to be widows and their daughters. Most of these widows had once been farmers' wives with enormous families; and each one had providentially one daughter left to her for her sole benefit. It was so nice for the mothers, everyone said sympathetically. "Such a comfort to her that she has Mary." These women had led the average lives, with the average mixture of pleasure and joy in their sorrows; but still it was felt that, as women and mothers, a "comfort" was due each of them.

Jennie was one of these old-young and middle-aged daughters now. Nettie Johnson, Bella Kleinfelder, Pansy Larson . . . too many to mention. They lived in houses that had not been remodeled since the deaths of the fathers and hoarded the small means upon which they and their mothers were living. Nettie Johnson did a little sewing and Jennie wrote her *Sylvania Notes* for the *Republican*; but none of them had any real occupation save to care for the house and mother, and occasionally to welcome back the other sisters and brothers when they came home for visits. They were not members of the two principal clubs, the Sunset Club or the Circle of Twelve. Some of them did church work, but it was felt that they were not to be counted upon. "You know Bertha doesn't like to leave her mother," people would say. Besides, it was only becoming that the matrons should be the church workers and club members of the town. These others were housekeepers and householders, to be sure. But the fiction of their being less responsible and hard-working than the married women was kept up; and they were called by careful courtesy "girls."

Jennie could never get over her surprise that Dot English was now often counted among these "older girls." She remembered Dot's wild popularity at Wesley. But that was the trouble, people said. Dot had "fooled along too long." She had never been able to make up her mind concerning the Fish and Herbert and Harry of whom she used to tell Jennie in the school yard. Now she found herself stranded—all the Academy boys having given her up and married, and no one left in Sylvania whom Dot would "look at." There were a distinctly limited number of bachelors—Martin Green the undertaker whom they had long given up as hopeless; the barber who went on periodical sprees; Herman Tiede who was reported to be a Socialist and "batched it" in a little cabin down by the creek, and was therefore beneath consideration.

The humbler ones—Jennie, Bella, Pansy—who were frankly becoming aged and out-of-date, saw little of Dot. Dot was now among the dozen or so of the elite who made a business of Five Hundred. Bridge was still too metropolitan to have reached Sylvania. Jennie got many of her items from Dot—"Miss Dot English was a Dubuque passenger Friday." Dot was the only well-dressed woman in Sylvania. Clothes had become her one distinction and reason for being, along with her hand in Five Hundred. The love she had once had for general admiration was now concentrated in hearing people say: "What a wonderful hat! Oh, you do always have the loveliest things!" She was still pretty, not aged appreciably. But she was a little thin, a little tense—her face, her small dry hands that had never learned to do anything but play a bit of popular music on the piano. Her voice and manner were slightly over-animated. Her dark brown hair—she was the only woman in town who owned an electric curling iron—was always a trifle too perfect under the net, a trifle too elaborately waved and fastened.

Some of these "girls" never went out. Gertie Hardcastle's mother was "queer"

and Gertie never dared to leave her. Gertie had to keep all the doors fastened so that her mother would not get out and wander off while Gertie was at work in the kitchen. Osie Lake had got into the habit of just staying at home and looking after her little house. Pansy Larson lived only a few doors from Jennie; and in the summer evenings, when Pansy's mother—a tiny wrinkled Swedish woman—was safely installed on the porch with one of the neighbors to look after her, Pansy would drop over to see Jennie a moment, to sit on the porch and talk or go out and see how the garden was doing.

Pansy persuaded Jennie to join the Larkins Club, to which both maids and matrons were admitted in the interests of soap and premiums. Every summer the club had a picnic at Lawrence's Spring. The Larkins Club was Pansy's chief passion, aside from her mother. She bought recklessly of soap and lotions. Her house was filled with premiums, and pride in having the most in town consoled her for all failures. Sometimes Jennie was asked to parties with Bella, Pansy and Nettie, where they ate heavily of cake and coffee and played Some R' Set out of compliment to Bella, who was a Methodist. Bella Kleinfelder was noted as the most expert Some R' Set player in town.

None of these "girls" owned automobiles. But sometimes people with cars stopped for them and took them for short evening drives or on longer outings if they could find someone to stay with mother. Jennie did not come of one of the old families. She was not so well known in Sylvania as Bella or Gertie Hardcastle. The only one who stopped for her was Doc Zimmerli. He had seen a great deal of her while Hod was sick, and he always declared—with an accent of reproach—that Jennie Robinson was one of the finest women in Sylvania. It was an adventure when Jennie looked out from the porch in the early evening and saw that the doctor's Buick was turning down her small cross street. "Come on, Jennie, take a little spin," his hearty voice called. His

wife's face smiled vaguely welcoming from the dimness of the car.

Jennie was inwardly fluttered, hurried into the house, asked her mother whether she was *sure* that she didn't mind being left for a little while, got her coat, took a glance at her hair. She did not want to keep the doctor waiting. Once or twice the Zimmerlis took her on longer trips—to the Government Fish Hatchery at Belle View or on a fishing trip to the Wapsie River. Both places were famed as "lovely scenery." Jennie thought and dreamed about them for months afterward. She felt a thrill of pride when she wrote out her item:

Dr. D. V. Zimmerli and wife and daughters Myrtle and Vivian, and Jennie Robinson, autoed to Corson's Mill last Wednesday for a pleasant day's fishing and outing.

In these years, the Robinsons' little house was very clean and quiet with only the two of them there. Since the children had left it, it had acquired an air of worn immaculateness and precision. Always dusted, always in order, the furniture placed sedately. The house needed paint badly, but Jennie kept the spreading lawn perfectly mowed and trimmed clear down to the garden. When the Robinsons had first moved into the house, it had seemed raw and new, with no flowers, a poor lawn, little scrubby fruit trees, and just beyond the bare iron rails of the railroad track. But now it was elderly, like Jennie and her mother; left behind, a trifle forlorn, on that little cross street of three houses that ended with the track. The flowers had grown—bluebells and ferns from the woods, close to the wall, nasturtiums in an old stump that Jennie had once hollowed out and filled with earth. The peonie bushes had spread out beside the step and on the lawn, drooping with great rose-pink blossoms that touched the ground. The apple trees in the backyard were older. The grass was deep on the lawn. Tall ranks of sweet clover almost hid the railroad track. The house was weathered.

The two led a quiet life. Mrs. Rob-

inson had aged early. She was getting feeble—a small uncertain shapeless figure, her thin brownish-white hair pinned insecurely as always, her skin wrinkled and blotched with brown, her faded eyes, always a little teary, still looking anxiously out from behind thin, rimless glasses. A residue of sadness was left in her from all her troubles—the hard time to get along, the disappointments with the children, Artie's death. . . . She did not complain much, but she was never happy. She was afraid of each new step—of trying the beans in a different place in the garden, of taking a new medicine. She would wonder and debate, murmur: "I don't know . . ." She clung to Jennie. But she had never lost her underlying sweetness of character, that made Jennie regard her now as a loved and helpless child.

She spoke often of the other children—wondered if Flossie had moved, if Nellie's little girl was all right now, how Frank was getting along in Dakota. She had been hurt and bewildered at the greedy wrangle over property at the time of Hod's death; but it had not weaned her from her children. She wondered if Nellie wouldn't come in and see her some day soon. If Charlie and his wife wouldn't visit them the next summer. Jennie was indignant that the others thought of her so lightly, never bothered to come near her or see how she was getting along. Jennie watched her with a protecting tenderness, loved her more and more. She came gradually to realize that her mother was all that she had. She brooded upon the sweetness and gentleness that had survived all troubles, until she conceived a kind of adoration of her. She exaggerated her mother's need, her own devotion. She must, if she would keep her feeling of use and purpose in life.

Frank, Cliff, Flossie, Nellie—it was almost as if they had never been. Flossie was too far away to send for her now. She wrote sometimes, careless complaining letters when she wanted sympathy. Nellie and Frank were of-

fended because Jennie had wanted the whole property for her mother. Nellie and her husband said that Jennie had tried to beat them out of their share.

And Charlie was gone from their world. After his graduation from Mt. Hope, he had taught for a while instead of going into the ministry. First, he had had the school at Syracuse. He used to come home at exciting and unexpected times—a rather solemn, earnest young man. Jennie had been immensely proud of him. But from there he had gone to Millerd, and there he had married Selma Peterson, a girl from one of the prominent families in town. Jennie and her mother noted sadly how she had "changed him." He was not their Charlie any more. Selma had wanted him to teach, and so he had never gone into the ministry and become a great preacher as he and Jennie used to dream. He was now Superintendent of Schools at Gilead.

What was "her" influence, Jennie used to wonder? How could any man be so swayed by his wife? But Charlie seemed completely changed now in manner, thought and ambition. Now he wanted to get ahead. For some reason, Selma had always had a kind of grudge against Jennie. She had permitted Charlie to write to his mother, even to contribute a small amount, that was growing smaller, to her support. When they came to Sylvania in the summertime, when they could not afford to go elsewhere, she was patronizingly fond of Mrs. Robinson. But she was cool and bewilderingly supercilious to Jennie. And Charlie, at first a little shamefaced and reluctant, but later more easily, copied her attitude.

He was not Jennie's boy any more. He replied vaguely to her anxious questions. He was devoted to Selma and the children, two little slender, much dressed girls, with bows of blue ribbon upon their shining, pale-gold hair, more assured and with a greater maturity of manner than Jennie. Only at times did his old love of Jennie suddenly break through. It was when they happened to be alone for a moment. Then he

would talk seriously, say: "Well, Jen, what's everything we do *for*, anyway?"

There was no one left but her mother. Jennie could see that she was failing. Organic trouble developed, had doubtless been impending for a long time. Poor Mrs. Robinson had neither courage nor strength to be operated upon. But she took care, medicine, constant attention. She had to have special things to eat. Jennie lavished everything upon her. She would not think beyond the days when she would not have her mother. She used what she needed of their dwindling capital. Mother must have things. *She* could get along. For two years, there was nothing in life for Jennie but her mother, the little house, the downstairs bedroom where Artie and her father had suffered and died. She did not notice herself how thin she got, how tired and careworn and ageing. Her mother constantly turned to her, appealed to her. Jennie gave as lavishly of her energy as of money. When she went hurriedly downtown for mail and groceries—still very neat in her nicely laundered house dress but not noticing how out-of-date it was—she answered this one and that: "Oh, a little better today. But I'm afraid she's failing." She went nowhere, not to church, never to the little parties with Pansy and Bella. People did not ask her any more. They took it for granted that Jennie could not leave her mother.

The others left all the care of the sick woman to her. But when Jennie sent them hasty word that their mother was dying, some of them came. Charlie, Nellie and Nellie's husband and children were all there. They sat about the parlor with solemn faces, tiptoed into the bedroom and out again, shaking their heads. They replied to the inquiries of neighbors. Charlie made all arrangements for the funeral.

Finally word went about town: "Mrs. Robinson died this morning." People said sympathetically: "Well, that poor woman had her troubles. They're over now. What a blessing she had Jennie!" Three or four said: "Well, now I'll tell

you, Jennie hasn't had any easy time."

It was a big funeral, in the church. Charlie had all three ministers sit on the platform, one to preach, one to deliver the opening prayer, and one the benediction. He asked the choir for special music. A crowd of people came who wondered why such a *todo* was made over this quiet and little known old woman. Some praised Charlie for this sign of devotion to his mother, some said that he was putting it on and just trying to show people. There was general criticism because his wife had not come.

CHAPTER XI

THAT house was so out of the way in these days. People who had not lived very long in town would ask: "Who lives down by the tracks in that little house?" Others would answer: "Why, I guess that's where Jennie Robinson lives. But you don't see her around much any more."

During the encroaching years of her mother's illness Jennie had gradually dropped out of the few things to which she belonged. Bella came in sometimes in the evening to see her. Poor Pansy Larson had a cancer. She was suffering constantly, refusing to risk an operation, only trying to hang on as long as her mother did. Her horror was of "going before mother." Jennie had never belonged to clubs or lodges, except the Larkins Club. Now she had even got out of the habit of going to church. It was a great effort to get out her best clothes and walk those five blocks alone. She felt a little strange now when she was among a crowd of people.

Hers was not a familiar figure on the streets. Strangers, children growing up, did not know her name—a small elderly person, neat but dowdy, wearing skirts demurely within a few inches of the ground, small prim hats of a by-gone era, faded clean wash dresses of pale unnoticeable colors, fitted neatly and gathered to a belt at the waist, little collars edged with lace or tatting.

Her face still kept its childish contour, with the grayish-brown hair brushed back from the smooth rounded temples over which the skin was now stretched too tightly. Still sedate, still quaintly composed, but her face overlaid with a wondering sadness. Jennie realized now something of her life. The beautiful, shy, childlike eagerness had faded out of her eyes. Her strength was drained. There was a lifelessness about her.

Otherwise she would have found something to care for, to lavish devotion upon, if it had only been a cat or a bird. Her heart still clung from long habit to Charlie. Every summer, she would tell people eagerly that she was expecting "Charlie's folks." She had at first accepted his wife with a shy, trustful pleasure. She had longed to worship the little girls. But at the last moment she was disappointed. "Charlie's folks have found they can't come. Charlie's wife isn't very well and they're going up to a lake in Minnesota." But she did not love Charlie as she had. She could not, because of Selma.

Charlie was getting on in the world. He had not made of himself what Jennie and his teachers had expected. He was not a great preacher or speaker. He had become a reasonably successful Superintendent of Schools—somewhat thin, with scanty, smooth light hair, light gray eyes, and neat spectacles with gold bows and narrow shell rims, clothes that just missed being well-cut and well-groomed, two sharp lines etched upon his forehead above his light eyebrows. A little ponderous, inclined to be irritable with the family. . . . He was the Superintendent at Marengo now, a town of about five thousand. His salary was reported to be three thousand dollars. People in Sylvania considered that he had done well. But Jennie could hardly say why, it was not what she had expected of him.

Selma was a thin, ambitious woman of whom Jennie unconsciously stood in awe. She felt that Selma was making an indifferent effort to be gracious when she sent last-minute Christmas presents, little up-to-date knickknacks which Jennie

could not use. Selma was not of her kind. She had been brought up to bridge and intense rivalry over fancy work, keeping her house with "all the very latest." She slaved tensely over the girls' clothes, wanting them to be just a little better dressed than other children, looking at every girl and into every shop window with a sharp eye for all the little newest touches. She and Jennie had nothing to talk about. Jennie thought wistfully that she could never get close to the girls. They were much alike, Helen and Beatrice. Slim, with fine light hair and thin fair-skinned faces. Selma seemed to spend most of her time over their clothing. Jennie remembered with awe their dainty handmade underwear, their little thin legs in white half socks and patent leather slippers.

While Mrs. Robinson was still living, and while Charlie was teaching in towns like Britt and Foley and Gilead, they had come oftener to Sylvania. Now they came less and less. Only once did all of them come, when Charlie was asked to deliver the graduating address for the Sylvania High School.

Charlie had lately bought a car. They drove into Sylvania. It looked so absurd and countrified—straggling, unpaved, with old-fashioned white houses set in neatly mowed lawns with evergreens. The girls clutched each other, or said: "Mother!", when they passed old-fashioned wooden lawn swings and a rockery. They laughed about the rush of traffic on the one business street—a truck, a Ford car, a wagon filled with rattling cream cans. A fat man with ancient trousers drawn up over a swelling blue shirt, standing in front of the blacksmith shop, stared, shouted: "Hey, Charlie!" "*Charlie!*" Helen repeated disgustedly.

The grass on the lawns grew green and lush. The great trees overshadowed the brown sloping road, shedding a flickering pattern of green leaf-shadows and sunlight. The last full-blown languorous apple blossom petals were drifting from the trees and scattering over the grass. The air was

weighted with indefinite fragrance—peonies, leaves and warm earth and growing grass, late fruit bloom, with sudden honey-sweet whiffs from bridal wreath bushes. . . . They turned to the left and went down toward the railroad track where the Robinsons' little house stood. More forlorn, more set apart than ever, the small dingy red-and-white house with the sloping porch, the sad forgotten stares of the windows shadowed by bushes, the spreading peonies and the cedar tree, the pump on its little cement platform, the garden sloping down to the green pastures along the track.

Jennie came out of the house, hurrying but a trifle hesitant. She wore a freshly laundered blue and white dress, white stockings and black strap slippers. She had a sharp vision of Charlie importantly shutting off the gas, Selma's thin, tense face looking out and mechanically smiling, the girls sitting disgustingly lax with amused, disdainful mouths. She greeted them with a sudden chilled timidity. . . .

It was not a successful visit. Jennie had been so anxious to have everything "nice" for them. She had hunted up recipes, done baking, put spotless hand-embroidered covers on the commodes in the two bedrooms and pillow cases with tatting. But Selma and the girls, in their delicate organdy dresses—Selma with her patter of embroidery, the Parent Teachers', Home Economics—were like foreigners in the old house. The girls, in their boredom, had moments of amusement when they looked at the tan and red ingrain carpet in the parlor, at the little low dark chairs with flat cushions of red and black satin pieces tied with red ribbons to the backs. The house had no foundation. It was bound with a border of heavy grayish paper tacked on with lathes. To get water at the pump and to have no lights!

Jennie had given the girls her upstairs bedroom and was sleeping in the boys' old room. She heard them talking at night—groaning over the bowl and pitcher filled with soft water that

Jennie had painstakingly treasured since the rain. She heard Selma come up and Beatrice complain: "Mamma, I *can't* get clean with this little bowl!" She heard Selma admonishing but sympathetic. She felt that the girls disdained her excellent but old-fashioned cooking, and the small table and few cheap dishes. Beatrice was petulant and homesick. They could not get her to do anything. Her stomach was upset and Selma declared that it was from the well water. They took Jennie on two short dutiful drives.

Jennie tried to think that this was the visit for which she had been making such great preparations. She tried to gather pride from Charlie's speech at the Hall—a speech orthodox upon later lines, emphasizing citizenship and Americanization instead of "going out into the world" and "on the threshold of life." People told him that it was "real good," "enjoyed your speech very much." He came home in a kindly and indulgent mood. He said: "Oh, don't go in yet, Jennie! Let's enjoy the moonlight." He thought about Jennie that night. He could not be too good to her because it would involve endless discussion with Selma. But before he went away, he quietly left orders with the Sylvania Electric Company that the house should be wired for electricity.

Jennie cried when she found what he had done. Somehow she was not pleased at all. She would rather have gone on using lamps forever. She felt that now Charlie would feel that he was through.

He had tacitly taken it for granted that his small payments should cease when their mother died. Jennie's little capitol was almost exhausted. She had even had to give up her *Sylvania Notes* when her mother was so ill. Sometimes at night she had hot desperate moments. Of course she required little. She had the house and the garden, could raise her own vegetables. . . . The doctor had told her that her tonsils were bad and might cause serious trouble, but to pay forty dollars or so to have them out was beyond her wildest expectations.

Most people knew little about Jennie. She was not a subject of general gossip. But there were a few who talked. They said: "I guess Jennie Robinson hardly knows what to do. I wonder what she lives on." They speculated as to whether Charlie "contributed anything." The old Lutheran minister's people, the Freitags, had been great friends of the Rob Wolcotts. They had told the Wolcotts about how much Jennie had done for the family, particularly for Charlie. But Doc Zimmerli talked about it the most. He said: "Every damn thing that family has is owing to Jennie. They wouldn't be anywhere if it wasn't for her. They've just fed upon her goodness. That Charlie makes me sick—fellow like that. He'd never have had all that education if it hadn't been for Jennie. Now why doesn't he do something for her? Folks ought to tell him." The doctor was Jennie's firm friend, as was Mrs. Guthornsen and the Eli Washburns, those two ancient people still living in their house in the south part of town and chasing children off the lawn. Doc Zimmerli, as people said, "just stormed around" about Charlie Robinson.

The doctor was the one who found out that Jennie had sold her chickens and some furniture to pay for markers for the old Robinsons' graves. He was in a rage. Why should all this fall upon Jennie? Did no one else take any responsibility? He was for writing to Charlie, for driving out to see Nellie Kaster and her husband. But he never did it. His wife persuaded him "not to get himself mixed up in anything."

The lot at the cemetery was all that Jennie had left. It was a mark of good citizenship in Sylvania to keep the lots in perfect order. Jennie was proud of hers—well placed, a large polished slab engraved in plain letters "ROBINSON," the two neat markers for "Father" and "Mother." If they had not had much while they lived, they had at least attained the end of right-minded villagers, a neat well-kept lot in the cemetery with someone to put flowers

upon it and look after it. Jennie only wished that she could have moved Artie's little grave there. She felt badly over Artie's little cheap weathered stone.

But what could she do? It was too late for her to teach. Her soul rebelled against "going out working." Her family had drained her. She could not start anything. She was not the same Jennie who had worked and studied so fiercely, day and night, for that single year at the Academy. She clung to the memory of that. She magnified in her mind the dim lovely image of the April night when she and Byron had gone down to the ravine. Her heart was hurt, empty, tired. There were no longer her brood of little ones, her poor old suffering father, her mother. . . .

She must do something for herself. Bella Kleinfelder told Nettie Johnson that she heard that Jennie was thinking of taking the agency for the Nesta Perfume Company. To go about and sell toilet articles. Jennie had asked Bella timidly about it. Bella and Nettie talked it over indignantly together. They said: Think of all that Jennie had done for that family! They fumed in vague terms about what Charlie should be made to do. Bella, who found out everything, had learned how Jennie had helped him through school and college. She declared that she didn't think much of his speech that night anyway. She said—and Doc Zimmerli agreed with her, too—that if Jennie had had a chance she would have been brighter than he. Bella had heard that lots of people in Marengo didn't like Charlie or his wife. They repeated old history. Dot English had once said that the English teacher at Wesley had said that one of the best pupils she had ever had had been Jennie Robinson; and that Charlie couldn't compare with her.

There was no secret of what Doc Zimmerli thought. He said: "I'd take Jennie any time. The best of the lot, too good for the rest of them. That was the trouble." And he said it was queer how the ones that deserved the most got the least half the time in this world.

(The End)

The Sacred Name

By Burton Rascoe

*Oh! The formidable enmity of fate!
Blumine ist aus meinem Leben gegangen!*

I CHANCED a moment ago upon that, a single entry on a page otherwise blank, in the journal of a sixteen-year-old boy (who had been enticed into the habit of recording his notions and activities by the persuasions of Emerson's Journals). You will divine that he had been reading "Sartor Resartus," and that he was studying German. You will not divine, unless you are unusually gifted, the tragedy implicit in this enigmatic notation. For you must know that to the youth one name, then, was sacred; when it was necessary to designate *her*, even in the privacy of a diary into which no one ever looked save himself, he chose a symbol; and that the happiest, or unhappiest choice for the moment was the symbol of Teufelsdröckh's aspiration and despair . . . Let us look at it coldly (one can after fourteen years): whether that slip of a girl possessed a mind (or even a body, beyond the impalpable depths of liquid, brown eyes) it was never his privilege to know . . . No, I mistake; he knew or felt there were hands which he touched with curious tremors and which impelled him to abominable doggerel which he mistook (and she) for sublimest poetry. You see, she had the capacity for listening, and this boy talked of himself and what he was to do in the world—for her. Without this audience and the acute physical anguish the touch of her hands gave, he was miserable, over a period of, let's see, six months.

So it came about that the boy took

measures to heighten his happiness: he waited for her around the corner from her house that he might carry her books to school; he recited to her, in a tremulous undertone, "Heidenröslein" (without an *arrière pensée*). "Aus Meinen Groszen Schmerzen," and "O matre pulchra, filia pulchrior" (with an *arrière pensée*), between sandwiches in the high school lunch-room, (that she was ignorant of both German and Latin only helped matters, for he could translate and explain—after the music of the lines—which gave him a glorious sense of her dependence; he would protect her, in the great world, against the insidious traps of German and Latin that might lie in her path). From school, too, he escorted her, brashly, to a distance from which he might not easily be perceived from a window of her house. On Saturdays, by arrangement, they met in the library, the drug-store, in the most heavily shaded corner of the park, and once, by chance in a street car. They were alone there. It was early afternoon. The season was spring. Tacitly they forgot their destination. At the end of the line, four miles from town, near a woodland rarely frequented, the conductor switched the trolley to return. These two, boy and girl, descended to the ground to stretch their legs and presently they were sitting on his coat beneath a tree.

He had in his pocket a copy of "Leaves of Grass" and, audaciously, he read, as if it were the response in the Mass, "Calamus." It seemed to him beautiful and she, he was sure, was of the same mind. At all events, she whispered, when she had made certain

he had reached the final period, that it was "lovely"; and these were golden words, like the minor chords in the languid movement of the *Pathétique*, for which, in reverence, he kissed, very faintly and swiftly, her hair . . . A tear, her tear, splashed upon the open page of his book and frightened him; perhaps he had been too bold, had taken an unfair advantage; he hastened to assured her he was sorry, that he could not help it, that he would not do it again . . . He helped her to her feet. The clasp was warm and fluttery; the odor of her hair was yet in his nostrils; she was very close . . . Her lips were moist . . .

The ride back to town was a troubled silence. Next day he received, through a schoolboy messenger, a misspelled note, tenderly and poignantly worded,

that her uncle was sending her back to her parents; that it would be impossible for her or him to write because her father was very strict; that she would always love him more than anyone else; that perhaps it was all for the best . . . She asked him not to forget her. There were many exes.

The precise nature of the illness which made this boy's brain a saturated sponge, a victim of general aphasia, and set him to scribbling silly verses over an agonized period of six weeks, no anatomist (not even Robert Burton) has ever determined. But it was acute . . . Surcease came, which is irrelevant to this notation.

It is odd that with the flight of years, the man who was once this boy recalls all this so clearly and forgets—her name.



Conflagration

By Harry Kemp

YOU sent a rich return to my desire:
 No chaste, small kiss, white sister to a prayer,
 But the soft creeping of a secret fire
 Rousing to fury when it tasted air.

Beyond the days' small pace of joy and woe
 We gave ourselves unto transcending power,
 And it is glorious to be burning so
 Turret on turret, tower on rosy tower.

We built our palace hugely out of pain,
 And out of all that ecstasy could lend—
 What though a small black heap, smoking with rain,
 And one charred shaft of ruin mark its end!



Her Last Fade-Out

By Harry B. Smith

(Author of "Robin Hood," "The Fortune Teller," "The Wizard of the Nile,"
"Foxy Quiller," etc., etc.)

I

THE clock in the entrance hall chimed the hour of three, and the sound, faint and far away, was just enough to turn the equipoised scale between sleep and consciousness. In perfect slumber there are no dreams, so we are told by the explorers of that world of shadows; and Brenda wondered if she had really been asleep at all. She realized that her mind had been invaded by a strange medley of plans, fancies, and memories that might have been the beginning of dreams or the last lingerings of conscious thought. In the silence that followed the third chime of the clock, she reflected that, if she went to sleep at once, she would get only four of the eight hours that nature and habit have fixed as the normal allowance for all but night-watchmen and tired business men whose wives are dancing to reduce. If only we could do without sleep entirely, she thought, how much more we could accomplish in our short lives. "Tired nature's sweet restorer," yes; but Nature is a grim practical joker in many ways. She gives us a limited number of years to work and play, and then ties a string to one third of them, during which we might as well be dead, for all the fun we have. Tom Moore suggested that

*"The surest of ways
To lengthen our days
Is to steal a few hours from the night."*

But those who have given that system

a fair trial have found that days so lengthened are apt to shorten the years.

Brenda's maid was to call her at seven. Half an hour later the new car would stand at the door, the envy of passers-by who would be in no doubt as to its ownership, for the public recognized even her initials. For the five years preceding the disappearance of her name from the electric light signs, Brenda Fair had been, according to the press agents, "Everybody's Sweetheart," the world's favorite Cinderella, with thousands of stepsisters envious of her girlish beauty, the infinite variety of her photographed adventures, and the love and luxury that were the never-failing reward of screened virtue. "Flapper," as a word, was imported from England, but the flapper as a recognized institution was established and popularized by Brenda Fair.

To the multitude who sat in darkness blinking at a shining world of romance, Brenda Fair was an embodied joy; wild, irresponsible youth was her monopoly. The Banker's youngest child just sub-debbing into lovely womanhood; the barefooted waif entrusted to the haggard derelict by his dying pal; the vagrant hoyden of the village, in ragged gingham, with her shaggy, sad-eyed hound dog; in the minds of many thousands these delectable types were identified with Brenda Fair.

Suddenly there came a time when her adorers looked in vain for her name connected with a new picture. Some of the old favorites were revived, and

then the highly colored pictorial announcements of the drama of unconscious humor knew her no more. People wondered a while and then forgot. New Cinderellas were discovered by new Prince Charmings who pronounced "film" in two syllables, but who recognized talent when they saw it and gave it a chance. In estimating the public, Barnum was not the only one who was right. Rip Van Winkle also discovered a great truth when he stated that we are soon forgotten when we stop advertising.

Fame is a pleasant thing till it becomes a bore, and Brenda smiled as she thought of the little group of admirers who would surround the car waiting to see their favorite, "in person," as the advertisements say. By nine o'clock she must arrive at the country house on Long Island, which was to represent the new home of the little shop-girl, now a millionaire's bride. The mansion had been placed at Brenda's disposal by its friendly owner who had made a fortune in a business now obsolescent, and was devoting his leisure to perfecting a non-alcoholic intoxicating beverage. At this beautiful home the garden scenes of "The Lure of Evil" were to be taken. Brenda turned her slender figure in the great soft bed. It—the bed—had once belonged to one who had known how uneasily lay the head that wore a morганatic crown.

Subconsciously, Brenda was aware that the turning was gracefully done, for how many times had she turned in bed in a little white virginal room with the eyes of millions upon her; when the exclamatory adjectives "Cute!" and "Adorable" had echoed through the darkened palaces of art loudly enough to awaken the piano player. Her cheek caressed the pillow persuasively. Why shouldn't she sleep? All was well with her. Worry was absurd. What had she to worry about? Why shouldn't she be the happiest girl in the world? She *was*. And now she would think of everything pleasant, and sleep would come.

In what seemed the last moment of consciousness, she heard, or imagined, that the silence was broken by a sound, the noise as of a small object falling to the floor. It came from the dressing-room connected with the bed-chamber by a curtained arch.

Brenda listened for a possible repetition of the sound. Perhaps, after all, she had imagined it. She sat up in bed. Though the darkness of the room was relieved only by a faint gleam of light through the curtains of one window, she knew that her action was graceful and her expression alluring. The same millions had seen her sit up in bed while the perfect maid brought the perfect breakfast. The luxury of the scene, her beauty, the daintiness of her boudoir, had been the wonder and despair of honest but aspiring working girls in every town and village in our great and glorious melting pot, who were convinced that virtue was not only its own reward but received most of the incidental prizes besides.

Brenda had always insisted on having that one ray of light in her sleeping room. To awaken in complete darkness gave her a moment of terror on imagining that she had suddenly become blind. She had been nervous about her eyes which had grown sensitive in the glare of the studio lights.

She listened intently. There was absolute silence. She imagined what had caused the sound. Chu Chin, the perfect Pekinese, disturbed in his sleep, had knocked a book or something off the couch; or perhaps the light Spring breeze had upset the narrow vase of flowers on the little table by the open window. It might be too cold for Chinny. She had better see about it. Thrusting into Cinderella's slippers the perfect feet that screened so well, she glided into the dressing-room, pressed the electric light button, and found herself for the first time in her life—except professionally, of course—looking into the blue-black muzzle of an automatic.

II

SHE knew the weapon well enough, as well as she knew the character who held it. His pose was correct—according to Hart. The man's make-up was irreproachable. Even at the moment she could not help thinking how cleverly life copied pictures. She felt, too, that she was not in any real danger. She knew that she was not going to be killed. Such things never happened to a star, though they might often impend. The situation positively shrieked for a "cut-back" showing one of nature's noble-men riding like mad to the rescue.

She was not particularly alarmed, but vaguely apprehensive, wondering what was to be the next action called for by the scenario. In "Sex and Sin," it had been required of her to exercise her woman's wit and wiles upon just such a burglar. On that occasion the bird had charmed the serpent. She had plied him with champagne, maddened him with the smiles of an ingenue siren, reduced him to drizzling adoration. Then she had watched her chance, and as the conquered cave-man drank to her beauty, her hand had crept toward the pistol—very slowly; and in a thrilling moment, the bewildered wretch found himself facing his own lethal weapon. His emptied glass crashed to the floor, and the cowed bully groveled abjectly, pleading for his worthless life. And then, timid, sensitive girl though she was, she had backed him slowly—slowly into an open trap-door that, by a miracle, happened to be in the floor of the old Earl's drawing-room, collapsing an instant later as Clyde Melnotte, her leading man, jumped through the window just in time to catch her and miss the burglar.

The present intruder seemed like an old acquaintance. Experience whispered to her that he had fallen into evil ways through no fault of his own, but because of some great wrong done to him when he was a mere lad. Instinctively she knew that somewhere there was a sweet-faced mother placing a lamp in a window for her wayward son,

whispering in large black letters: "God knows where he is this night." It seemed to her that a great moral lesson should now be impressed in classic prose:

*NO SOUL IS SO UTTERLY
LOST IN SIN THAT IT CAN-
NOT BE REDEEMED BY THE
MAGIC OF A WOMAN'S LOVE*

The scene suggested that the unknown poet and philosopher who writes the titles had neglected an opportunity, when she heard a hoarse voice say sharply:

"It's all right, lady. Only don't move or make a fuss."

Like an echo from past megaphones in "Sex and Sin," she seemed to hear the director saying:

"Don't let on you're scared of him. You're ca'm. Look him in the eye. Steady—till he lowers the gun. That's it. And you, Mortimer, you're crazy about the kid at the first flash. Open your mouth! You're surprised! Drop your hand with the gun in it. Slow! That's it. Now run through that bit and see if you can get it. Camera!"

The gunman now under consideration was a better actor than Mortimer. He needed no megaphone to tell him that he was fascinated by the girl at first sight.

No malign pursuer of screen innocence ever threw more concentrated infatuation into his eyes, admiration mingled with surprise. The surprise plainly expressed that he had seen the lady before and that he had not expected to see her here and now. The admiration would have been registered by anyone; for he saw a winsome little face, a trifle thin perhaps, with features of a captivating prettiness surrounded by a justly celebrated halo of red-gold hair. The Irish eyes were equally famous. A near-poet, who conducted what he facetiously called a "colyum" in a morning paper, had once published a near-poem in which he said that, before meeting Brenda, he had never known that there were *two* Lakes of Killarney. Of

course if he had known that there are three, it would have queered the poem.

The intruder saw these eyes, in which Celtic mysticism and melancholy were surrounded by traces of blue make-up on the lids. He saw a slender girlish figure clad in pajamas which might have been made of one of Salome's seven veils. No decent burglar could look at a startled fawn like that without yielding to his better nature and wishing that his automatic were a bunch of violets.

Acting upon the order echoing subconsciously: "Be ca'm. You're scared to death, but don't show it," the Killarney eyes quickly realized what *they* were looking at. They saw a tall man with the figure of a Bushman—Francis X; not Australian—who might be thirty or thirty-five; his clothes well made and well worn—in both senses; his features regular and with a certain rugged strength. The type was associated in Brenda's mind with several of the most indestructible heroes of the arsenal dramas of Western life, the bars of mining camps, the great "open places," so hard to find in the East, where—as the title writers say—"the hand of effete civilization has not left its footprints."

There was something strangely familiar about him, too. Perhaps it was his likeness to one whom she had seen, his back to the wall, a gleaming forty-five in each hand, sending bullets and a daredevil's laugh of defiance toward half-a-hundred Mexicans who, at close range, wasted enough powder to make Dupont a rich man, only to prove that the gringo bore a charmed life. For all the effect their bombardment had, the greasers might as well have been throwing hot tamales.

And yet the memory aroused by this man seemed to be of times more remote, of a past far distant, something associated with days of innocence and peace, before the world had discovered Brenda Fair, when wealth and fame had been hidden behind the screen of the future.

"I didn't know this was your place."

The firm, not unpleasant voice jarred upon her instant of retrospection.

"You know me then?" she said, forcing a nervous little laugh.

"Know you? Should say I do. I've seen you fifty times. Hope I didn't scare you much."

"Of course you frightened me," she purred demurely. Impossible to be too sweet, if she intended to fascinate and disarm this one as she had the lawless brute in "Sex and Sin."

"I'm afraid you won't find much here," she continued. "Tomorrow is my last day's work. The next day I sail for Europe. The trunks have gone; my jewels and everything."

As she spoke, she moved toward the wall and her hand glided slowly over its surface.

"You needn't push that bell." There was a command in the voice, but it softened at once, as her hand dropped, and he spoke again. "I'll be out of here in a minute. I don't want to deprive *you* of anything. I'm awfully sorry. I didn't know it was your house. I'm—I'm sorry; that's all I can say."

"You mean you—you've seen me in pictures, I suppose."

"Have I? In about everything you ever did, I guess. I first saw you two years ago in—'Conquering Kisses,' I think was the name of it. You played the tom-boy of the school, just a kid. Remember? Gee whiz! you don't look a bit older this minute."

Brenda smiled, and this time with no intent to allure; for no matter how young a girl may be, she doesn't mind being thought a little younger.

"You look a little tired—been working steady maybe, but, outside of that, seems as if you ought to be playing with dolls. Yes, I've seen you in all your shows. That one with the scenes down South before the Civil War—you know, where you played the little girl with her hair in pig-tails. Your great friend was a white mouse. Remember that part where you put the mouse in the old mammy's turban? Cutest thing I ever saw. And that last one, where you were the millionaire's lost child stolen by your father's lady friend. I'll never forget that scene in the police station

with you carried in by that big cop. I've got no use for 'bulls' as a rule; but that big guy certainly had a heart in him."

"You mean 'In Darkest Broadway' she suggested. "That cost Mr. Finebird over a million dollars."

"So I saw in the papers," he said, "and it was worth it—to me," and he added thoughtfully: "It must be wonderful to be—well, what *you* are."

"Oh, I'm just an ordinary girl," she admitted frankly, with the pretty embarrassment that always followed when a character met for the first time told her that she had beautiful eyes. "But of course it is pleasant to feel that one is doing good work and perhaps helping people who haven't much sunshine in their gray lives. I get so many letters from people telling me that I have helped them."

"It's the most wonderful thing in the world," he exclaimed eagerly. "After I saw you in that—what was it? 'The Girl-Wife's Secret'—I—well, I just went back to my lonesome room on Second Avenue, and—say—I ain't ashamed to admit it—I cried to think of the mess I've made of my life. Yes, dog gone it! I cried, and I felt better for it, too."

"I'm so sorry for you," she whispered; and now she had really given up all idea of getting the revolver from him. She could see that it was not going to be necessary.

"Oh, that's all right," he reassured her carelessly, ashamed of a moment's display of weakness. "I always feel like that when I see you. I don't know why it is, but no one else ever affects me that way. You seem to speak right to me. Sometimes I have even imagined you were looking at me. Ridiculous; isn't it?"

She gazed at him curiously. What was there about this man that gave her the unaccountable impression of having seen and known him long ago?

III.

"MAYBE your life isn't wrecked beyond hope," she ventured, "You have

a chance. You are a young man still."

"Thirty-one. Think I look older?"

"A little, perhaps."

"Sure I do; but that's what I am. Thirty-two next May."

"Thirty-two in May." She sighed. "My birthday is May too. Sometimes I feel quite old."

"That's a joke, *your* being old," he laughed. There was a pause in which Brenda seemed to hear the director calling for more action, and then: "Guess I'll be going along," he said.

"If I could do anything to help you," she suggested, and with a sudden impulse extended her hand toward a little gold bag on the table.

"No; please!" he protested, and then with obvious embarrassment: "There is only one thing I would ask you for."

Ah! here it was at last, and Brenda imagined that she heard through the megaphone:

"You're insulted. Get sore! That's it. More! Give him the cold eye"—which was the director's way of saying "Register offended dignity." The eyes of memory visualized one of the title writer's inspirations:

MAN, THE MASTER, DEMANDS AS A RIGHT THE KISS THAT A PURE WOMAN YIELDS BUT AS A SACRIFICE TO LOVE.

"I wish you hadn't said that," Brenda murmured reproachfully. "You know there are certain things that, with *me*, are only associated with a real and honest love, and not with the caprices of a chance acquaintance."

His sombre eyes were filled with disappointment.

"All right," he answered resignedly; "only I thought maybe you might have a little where you could get it without any trouble. I really need a drink this night, and I don't know where—"

"Wait!" she exclaimed. "Forgive me if I misunderstood you for the moment, but one meets so many who—"

She broke off abruptly and "Wait," she repeated.

Gliding lightly as a gazelle, across the

room, (and Brenda was one of the few whose walk did not screen as a waddle) she paused before the Chippendale bookcase wherein glistened in their vestments of morocco and gold the priceless treasures of literature, intact, immaculate, even as the subscription companies had delivered them. Brenda loved her books and it was one of her chief pleasures to dust them. Removing from their niche two volumes of the Poems of Robert Burns, that wondrous bard, whose honest face smiles from a billion cigar boxes, she with deft hand extracted from the dark recess within a glass flask of quaint design. Seemingly, its shape had been distorted by the convulsive grasp of some thirsting Titan. She swiftly passed it to the stranger's outstretched hand.

"One must be careful on account of the servants," she said; "but help yourself."

As she turned to replace the two volumes of the lyric glory of Scotland upon their shelves, from one of them, unobserved by her, there dropped a photograph. The stranger paused, the bottle parting from his reluctant lips, and stooped to pick up the picture. As he was about to return it to her, he glanced at it and then gazed upon it with startled eyes. Faded and old-fashioned it was, an example of the photographer's art in the days before the camera became a messenger that brings romance into the humblest hearts and high thinking to the lowliest brows; the counterfeit presentment of a young and beautiful woman, her eyes aglow with the divine tenderness of motherhood as they contemplated the babe upon her knee.

"In Heaven's name," he exclaimed, "who is this?"

With a glance at the photograph, Brenda answered:

"My aunt and my little cousin. It's just an old thing. I had forgotten I had it. I'll take it, please."

But the stranger had turned the picture over and read the inscription on the back. He confronted the girl sternly.

"You are lying to me," and his dark eyes were fixed upon her with a look that seemed to read her very soul. "This is *your* portrait!"

"Well, yes; it is," she admitted, and the eyes and lips had grown suddenly mutinous. "What of it? How dare you speak to me like that?"

"Your picture, and *mine*!"

"*Yours*?"

Before Brenda's wondering gaze he thrust the photograph, and she read, in writing that she knew only too well, the words:

"Buddy Simpson, aged one year, three months." His eyes were relentless now, almost cruel in their dominating power, as he said:

"I am Buddy Simpson!"

In that instant these two souls, wandering in the labyrinths of devious ways, were face to face and the clouds of years slowly dissolved in a mist of tears; and then all resentment, all regret were swept away in the simple words of loving hearts too full of eloquence:

"Mother!"

"My son!"

IV

As the first gleam of dawn stole through the parted curtains and the birds uttered their early matin chirpings, these two, reunited, clung together in a long embrace. And as the dawn brightened into the radiance of glorious noon, mother and son sat hand in hand, silent in the purest happiness that they had even known.

Buddy—for it was indeed Budford J. Simpson, Jr. purified by years of burglary and sorrow—was the first to speak.

"Mother," he said, "you must leave all this. You must come with me."

But long years at a well-nigh fabulous salary had schooled this woman to luxury. She gave a quick glance around the sumptuous room wherein were gathered the priceless treasures of a hundred auctions. To leave all this gilt and splendor for she knew not

what? Never! Anything rather than that.

"You are jesting, Budford dear," she murmured. "For you, my son, I would make any sacrifice; but to give up everything, just as my career has reached the heights; when the world is at my feet? No, no, dear. It is impossible."

"Mother," he repeated, and there was a sternness in his voice that she remembered well, the inflexible, almost Puritanical determination of her first husband, Chub Simpson of the Simpson Comedy Four. "I say it *must* be. I cannot offer you the luxury that surrounds you here, the wonders of art that misguided wealth alone can buy. But how is all this splendor obtained? It is the result of base deceit, hypocrisy of the most repellant kind. Can I ever look again upon the screen that displays a girl of twelve cavorting in rompers, or rolling down hill, all laughter and lingerie, and say to myself: '*That is my mother?*' And, after all, are plush and wealth any essential to true happiness? No, no, mother mine; happiness comes from within."

He paused and poured himself a drink.

Her hands covered her averted face, and he knew that his words had appealed to her better self, knew well that those hands concealed tears that had not the artificial refinement of transmuted petroleum, but welled straight from the heart. And yet, "No, no," she moaned, and the slight girlish form was convulsed with the struggle between maternal love and worldly ambition. After a brief pause, he spoke more gently.

"Mother," he said, "I cannot offer you jewels, sables, rare dogs, and priceless soaps, pictorial leather sofa cushions—the thousand luxuries to which you have become inured; but I have my profession, and, while not so lucrative as yours, it is at least candid and in the open day. No one can say that I deceive anyone but the police. In only one way does it resemble yours—I get away with it. Remember, dearest, a time will come—it may be twenty years from now, but it *will* come, when

that golden hair will change and that girlish figure will lose its boyish grace. Then," and his voice was like the muffled drums of fate, "then, instead of girls of fifteen, playful urchins, the ear-ringed flapper of the garish salons of Terpsichore, you will be relegated to playing women of *twenty*."

"Not that," she gasped, and her slim form shivered in its silken draperies. "Don't! I can't bear it."

"It is true," he said. "The full-blown roses will displace the buds. There comes a time when even the child of the silver screen must attain years of discretion."

He hastily scrawled upon a writing pad.

"That is my address," he said. "Join me when you will, but let it be soon."

Brenda's face was the map of a battlefield where conflicting emotions strove for mastery. Long she sat while the light of the golden morning brightened the changeful tresses that now rivaled the sunbeams in their radiance, and might anon mock the raven's wing. She was lost in that profound meditation with which even the most thoughtless girl confronts the great problems of her future. Wealth, the life of the world's pampered darling who knew not a whim ungratified; could she give up all for the joys of simple domesticity?

The thought terrified her. Darkly sinister loomed before her distracted eyes the baleful shadow of a kitchenette. Her jewels alone, those glittering baubles which she had ingenuously told Budford had been sent to an invented steamer for an imaginary voyage; they alone were worth a king's ransom. With this thought, an inspiration came to her, as it often does to all of us in our moments of doubt and perplexity.

"Budford darling," she said, "you have conquered. I will play the better part. Wait for me but a moment."

As she vanished from the room, he half stifled the exclamation of joy and pride that rose to his lips. He had known what she would do, his own brave, noble little mother. It seemed but an instant ere she returned, bearing

a parcel of about two quarts in dimension, while clenched in one delicate hand was a legal document to which she clung as to a last hope.

"Take this, my dear one," she urged, and placed the parcel in his arms. "Guard it well, for it may be useful to us in the days to come. And now leave me and I will join you when and where you will."

The look of ineffable tenderness that shone in his eyes as they met hers was proof that these two understood each other well. Going to the open window,

he with practiced hand pried loose its fastening, mute evidence that he had forced an entrance. Then he clasped her once more in his arms. In another moment he had disappeared through the window, beyond which the fire-escape led the way to happiness. Brenda gazed after him fondly and proudly, and then glanced at the document in her hand.

It was a burglary policy for three hundred thousand dollars; no great fortune indeed; but with this new joy entering her life, the glory of motherhood, Brenda was content.



Home Town

By Gordon Wallace

THE WORLD—Main Street.

The Flesh—The postmaster's wife.

The Devil—The man who runs the billiard parlor.



FICTION marries the man to the girl in the end. Life marries him to her in the beginning.



ALL love affairs are not the same. Some you get over and some you manage to get out of.



RENDEZVOUS—a place where you catch cold waiting for her.



Répétition Générale

By *H. L. Mencken and George Jean Nathan*

§ 1

ORIGINS.—Wherever life is hard and harsh—in the mountains, on the prairies, in crowded tenements—there democracy is believed in. Democracy is the liberty of the have-nots. Its aim is to destroy the liberty of the haves.

§ 2

Footnote 3,743a.—Marriage, as everyone knows, is chiefly an economic matter. But too often it is assumed that economics concerns only the wife's hats; it also concerns, and perhaps more importantly, the husband's cigars. No man is genuinely happy, married, who has to drink worse gin than he used to drink when he was single.

§ 3

Hocus-pocus.—One of the curious heritages from the Roosevelt régime of tin-horn kaiserism is the squad of so-called Secret Service detectives that follows the President of the United States upon all his peregrinations. These guards never leave His Excellency when he issues from the White House; they even lurk about him when he receives his lieges there. When he enters an automobile one of them rides with the chauffeur, a couple of others follow on motor-cycles, and half a dozen more bring up the rear in another machine. When he makes a speech two or three stand before the platform from which he roars and rages, and the rest, imperfectly made up as United States Senators, are beside him and be-

hind him. Like all other detectives they are quite unable, of course, to disguise their business. Detectives look the same all over the world. Not even the yokels of the hinterland are deceived by their plug-hats, long-tailed coats and profound frowns.

The theory behind the employment of these transparent bulls is that they protect the President against assassins. That theory is 99.99% buncombe. If assassins had a habit of falling upon Presidents with clubs and bowie-knives there might be some sense in it, but the modern fashion, as everyone knows, is for the employment of firearms. A man who wanted to commit regicide would not be likely to make his attack in any fashion susceptible of frustration by policemen, whether in or out of uniform. He would draw his bead from a safe distance, and discharge his lead before even the most alert cop could detect him, and long before even the most agile could get at him. The late McKinley, when he was shot at Buffalo, was literally surrounded by policemen, and yet the assassin found it easy to hit him. Roosevelt himself, at Minneapolis, was plugged just as facilely. So with Lincoln and Garfield.

The only thing actually accomplished by all this solemn hocus-pocus is to keep the President himself uneasy—in brief, to scare him. The cops, you may be sure, do not simply stand about and posture as ambassadors: they come in daily with hair-raising tales of murderers they have detected and chased away. The result is that the First Magistrate of the land, after he has been in office a year or two, becomes enormously self-conscious every time

he has to appear in public, and begins to take on the air of a cocain-pedlar shadowed by the *Polizei*. Approach him in a friendly manner to offer him a swig from your flask, and he will duck under the nearest chair as you reach for your hip-pocket. Stick a hand-camera at him to obtain an heirloom for your great-grandchildren, and he will blanch, turn giddy, and yell "Kamerad!" It is a foolish business, and an ignominious one. If I were elected President tomorrow, my first official act would be to order the whole corps of guards thrown into the Potomac, with their artillery in their pockets.

§ 4

Award.—The elegant two-by-four custard pie awarded monthly by *Répétition Générale* to that American who, during the period in point, shall have contributed to the national culture the most profound and ineffable bonbon is announced today by unanimous vote to go to Mr. Will H. Hays for the following:

"There is a man" (indicating Adolph Zukor, president of the Famous Players Company) "who is greatly misunderstood in this country. From away down deep in his heart he has the conviction that this thing—this big thing—which we are trying to do is a matter of personal and patriotic duty. *Mr. Zukor has long since made money secondary in his viewpoint of the screen.* He now is heart and soul in favor of doing everything in his power to make motion pictures not only a medium of education in America, but an ambassador and foreign representative throughout the world, which will reflect the true American taste and character.

"I am particularly pleased now that I have been in the motion picture industry a few months to find the sincere desire on the part of a man like Mr. Zukor to uplift and cultivate the higher things of life through the medium of motion pictures. He has been sitting here talking with me an hour about the *nobler* side of cinema-play presentation in his country. There's no mistaking his real desire. Fine results are bound to come."

§ 5

Moral Paradox.—A man is often perversely comical to his fellow men in

the degree that he is a moral, compliant, shirkless and creditable member of the community. The man with a dozen children is thus ever a jocose and ribald subject, as is the man who respectably marries five or six times. If he is not a professional comedian, like Eddie Foy or De Wolf Hopper, say, he is, in the eyes of his less statutable fellows, yet an amateur zany of no mean parts.

§ 6

On Taking Counsel.—Of all the nuisances that make business a curse, perhaps the worst is that of having to attend a multitude of conferences and consultations, all of them useless. The craze for such idle palavers afflicts the whole world of business in America. Every head man and master mind has a cabinet modelled upon that of the President of the United States, and all department chiefs are summoned regularly to legislative sessions. I often wonder how much time is wasted upon such buffooneries every day. Three times out of four, when one calls up an American business man to do business with him, one finds that he is sitting in conference with his slaves and associates. Make a business proposal to him, and he has to refer it to some such absurd sanhedrin. There are offices in which pow-wows appear to go on all day long.

Are they worth the time they take? I doubt it. I have attended hundreds of them myself, and I can't remember a single one that got anywhere. Business is never actually transacted by six men or twenty men; it is transacted by two men, no more and no less. Two men can argue, fence, compromise and agree; three men, or four men, or five men can only gabble. Whenever such a conference as I have described comes to a decision worth making it is reached by two of the participants; the rest merely delay it idiotically, and then ratify it supinely. In the average business organization, I believe, the whole thing is hocus-pocus invented to flatter the boss. This boss presents an idea

that he wants to execute, his slaves and associates offer hollow objections and amendments to it to prove that they are earning their pay, and then they permit him to convince them or override them. The transaction is bound to tickle a business man. It demonstrates, at least to his own satisfaction, that he is a sapient and powerful fellow. Repeated often enough, it makes him feel that he is a Napoleon. No wonder he calls so many conferences!

I believe that all human enterprises, commercial as well as political, are best run as despotisms—that counsel is weakening and useless. If I had to work for any man, I'd prefer to work for a man who told me precisely what he wanted me to do, without the slightest doubt or hesitation, and who held me rigidly to the doing of it. And if I had men working for me, I'd greatly prefer their diligence and technical competence to their advice. The general slackness of business in America—the frightful duplication of effort, the waste of money upon nonsensical schemes, the incompetence everywhere prevailing, the naïve belief in “inspirational” rubbish—these things, I suspect, are largely products of the conference habit. What a joy, now and then, to do business with an old-fashioned business man, who is czar and pope in his own office, and who understands and controls every detail of his business!

§ 7

Recommendations to the Ku Klux.—The Ku Klux must be helped by all other 100% Americans who wish patriotically to preserve 100% Americanism. From a bulletin recently issued by the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education, on “Flag Exercises for the Schools of the Nation,” I therefore quote for the Klux a list of foreign-born Americans whose average percentage, by the current standard of American weights and measures, is perhaps not greater than 35, and who hence—were they still living—would be fair prey for a tar and feather massage:

S. S.—Nov.—4

James J. Hill, John Singer Sargent, Albert Gallatin, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, Carl Schurz, Louis Agassiz, John Ericsson, Frederick William Steuben, Franz Sigel, Alexander Hamilton . . .

§ 8

Attention of Moe Greenblatt, Sig Nussbaum, et al.—I quote, without comment, the following full-page advertisement of Charlop Brothers and Company, Seventh Avenue and Thirty-sixth Street, from the program of the New Amsterdam Theatre where the “Follies” is currently playing:

THE BEAUTIFUL GIRLS IN
“ZIEGFELD FOLLIES”
DELIGHT THEIR AUDIENCE AND DRIVE
DULL CARE AWAY... IN OUR NEW,
COMMODIOUS, AIR-COOLED SHOWROOMS
FORTY BEAUTIFUL GIRLS
MAKE WORK A PLEASURE, WHILE YOU
REVIEW OUR
FALL COATS, SUITS AND DRESSES

§ 9

Visit to a Great Capital.—Some time ago, during extremely hot weather, I found myself in Washington. Victualing time approaching, two fair creatures agreed to dine with me, and we decided to try a hotel roof. Two hotels in succession refused to allow us to ascend: it was Sunday night, and on Sunday nights dining on the roof is under the ban in Washington. But why? The room-clerk in one of the hotels told me that it was because the laws of the town forbade music on the Sabbath. But why have music? He didn't know. Nor did he know if any other hotel roof was open. Finally we found one, guided by a taxi chauffeur. It was on a widely advertised hotel—one always stated to be first-class. This is what happened:

We ordered some *hors d'œuvres*, including some tomatoes stuffed with crab-flakes, and two warm dishes and a cold dish. The waiter, after a long delay, brought the whole meal on to-

gether. I ordered him to take back the two warm dishes and to serve the *hors d'œuvres* alone. He served them on red-hot plates!—and the crab-flakes in the tomatoes turned out to be boiled rice. No bread appeared. I asked for it, and was told that it had to be ordered separately. When it came on it consisted of three small heels, stale.

Finally the *hors d'œuvres* were devoured, and the waiter brought on the two warm dishes and the cold dish. All three were served on hot plates! . . . I asked for some chocolate ice-cream. When it came it turned out to be full of grains of chocolate as large as BB shot. . . . The two gals, by that time, had given up. . . .

There used to be a first-rate restaurant in Washington—the St. Mark's. The last time I looked for it I found it closed and dismantled. A resident recommended another restaurant. When I got to it I found it as glaringly lighted as the operating-room of a hospital. Sitting at one end of it, one could count the flies on the bald head of an admiral at the other end—60 feet away.

§ 10

The Confederacy Again.—Ludwig Lewisohn's article on South Carolina, lately printed in the *Nation*, mentions incidently a cause of Confederate cultural decay that is too little taken into account. I allude to the extravagant and illogical exclusiveness of the surviving aristocracy. That aristocracy, before the Civil War, was chiefly based upon land, as all sound aristocracies must be, and it was open to any newcomer who got himself land enough. The Washingtons, when they came to Virginia, were certainly not aristocratic, but their extraordinary talent for acquiring land (largely by marriage) eventually brought them to the top of the tree in the colony. The Civil War, unluckily, ruined the old landowners and they lost most of their land—the only safe symbol of their dignity and position. In consequence, they sought a symbol within themselves, and found it in mere

descent. What remains of the Southern aristocracy today is simply an aristocracy of genealogists. It has no land, and, having no land, it has no social security and, what is more, no social function or duty. It would have been wiser had it been more hospitable to well-qualified newcomers after the War. Its error consisted in barring the good with the bad. What it forgot was that its own roots were very shallow, and that many of them struck down into very dubious soil. Not one aristocratic South Carolinian out of five can prove his descent from an ancestor, *circa* 1500, who was both a man of property and a gentleman.

This inbred, exhausted and senile aristocracy now finds itself in competition, not with individual newcomers of ability and breeding, but with a horde of rich upstarts, most of them unmitigated cads. These upstarts—some of them the offspring of the poor white trash of the early days and the others bounders from the North—now run the state in all departments. They own the cotton mills, they control most of the banks, and they are the dictators of politics. In some of the Southern states, notably Maryland, such noisome plutocrats have tackled the old aristocracy of the land and completely unhorsed it, and it is now scarcely recognizable. In other states, such as Virginia, the aristocracy has begun to show signs of new life, and may yet make a stand against the barbarians. But in South Carolina there is scarcely any battle at all. The old aristocracy is simply drying up and blowing away. In a few more generations it will survive only as a legend. For it has not only lost its ancient leadership; it has also lost its old vigor. Not a single first-rate man is visible in its ranks.

Lewisohn describes the *débâcle* conventionally, which is to say sentimentally, but there is actually a sort of rough justice in it. An aristocracy ceases to deserve its privileges when it ceases to be intelligent. Out of the barbarian hordes of South Carolinians, chiefly as a result of immigration or

adultery, there have come, since the Civil War, a number of men of distinguished talents. But practically all of them, confronting the lavender-draped defenses of the Charleston *noblesse*, have sought their fortunes out of the state. That *noblesse* was and is too stupid to distinguish between a rich note-shaver from the uplands and a fellow, say, such as Lewisohn himself. The difference is obvious to every intelligent man—but it remains incomprehensible to aristocracies that have begun to decay. If a hundred head of Lewisohns lived in the state today, and had the position due their talents, the rest of the country would hear of South Carolina far more often, and what it heard would be better worth hearing.

A grotesque irony hangs about all such stupidities. Lewisohn himself has been the central figure in another. One imagines the bombastic self-satisfaction of those incredible poltroons who fell upon him so bravely during the war—I mean at the Ohio State University. Well, the net result, after five brief years, is that they are posted before the whole country in such terms that their complacency must be very severely damaged, and that the university itself takes its place in American legend as the symbol and archetype of all seminaries of cads and numskulls. Only a few months ago the students in the place, apparently stung by this sudden ill-fame, brought out a contumacious magazine which got itself promptly suppressed by the faculty. Add that fact to the record.

§ 11

Erratum.—Psychoanalysis is not the correct spelling. It should be physioanalysis.

§ 12

No. 2,966.—It is possible for a woman, during her lifetime, to love a number of men, and each for a different and often diametrically opposed quality. A man, on the other hand, however

many women he may love, loves each and all of them for the same quality.

§ 13

Travelogue.—I find on consulting my notes that I have set foot in my time in the following American states: Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina, Florida, Ohio, West Virginia, Indiana, Illinois, Nebraska, Iowa, Wyoming, Utah, Nevada, Missouri, Georgia, Colorado and California. They come to 25—one more than half of the 48. Of those that remain I have a desire to see but three: Louisiana, Vermont and Arkansas. I can't imagine any man going into North Dakota, Alabama or Iowa voluntarily; I'd as lief visit Union Hill, N. J., or Long Island City. But Louisiana interests me as any land of lost romance interests me, and I hope, before I die, to view the long, lean Yankees on their Vermont hills and the rambunctious Arkansans in their miasmatic swamps. All three states have singularity. New Orleans is probably the only American city north of the Rio Grande that was once wholly civilized. Since beta-naphthol and Christian Endeavor began to penetrate the southern highlands, the Vermonters remain the only genuine American mountaineers. And the Arkansans, though they call themselves Southerners, seem to differ from all other Southerners in a dozen ways, and every difference is in the direction of picturesqueness. There is something mysterious about the state, and something wild and woolly, and something a bit incredible.

As I say, I have never been in Arkansas, but I once beheld an Arkansan and a year or two ago I displaced Trotzky, for a brief space, as the chief bugaboo of the literate minority of the populace. The Arkansan vouchsafed to these eyes was the Hon. Joseph Taylor Robinson, one of the state's Senators in Congress. I heard him make several

speeches and came to this conclusion: that he was (and still is, I believe) a man of no mean parts—certainly a very effective debater and probably a sound lawyer. I take it that he would think twice before denouncing the Ku Klux Klan, but he undoubtedly made some devastating arguments against the Disarmament Conference treaties when they were before the Senate—as the judicious may discover by consulting the files of the *Congressional Record*. The man is devoid of humor, as all true Southerners of the new school are, but he has ability.

My service as Trotzky *pro tem.* of Arkansas followed a brief (and perhaps contumacious) reference to the state in an article in this place. In most American states such a trivial invasion of the local dignity would have gone absolutely unnoticed. In a few the newspapers would have been content to denounce me as a liar and an ass. But in Arkansas the *intelligentsia* took it so badly that they called a meeting in Little Rock, issued a solemn proclamation charging that I was “a former subject of the Kaiser,” and called upon the Arkansas delegation in Congress to have me expelled from the United States! The thing seems incredible, but it is a fact. I wonder what the Hon. Mr. Robinson replied to that demand when it reached him—how he managed to convince the Arkansas patriots of the constitutional infeasibility of the scheme. That the Constitution runs down there, I doubt. Certainly it is not recognized by the Ku Klux. But on Capitol Hill it is still venerated—and because of that veneration I still breathe the free air of the noblest, bravest, gaudiest republic on God’s green foot-stool. Had the Arkansans had their way, I’d be pinning away at this moment in Paris or Munich.

§ 14

The Test.—Don’t ask what his religion is, or what his politics are, or what race he springs from, or how

he is treated by his wife. Simply ask how he makes his living. It is the safest and surest of all known tests. The man who gets his board and lodging in this world in an ignominious way is inevitably an ignominious man.

§ 15

Aphrodisia.—They talk of the immorality of jazz; such music, they say, is vicious, lecherous, demoralizing. Noise is never vicious, lecherous, demoralizing. The greatest of all aphrodisiacs is a sustained dead silence.

§ 16

Criticism in Philadelphia.—Two volumes of Nietzsche’s letters, translated into the vulgate, were published recently, and copies for review reached the editor of the *Philadelphia Public Ledger*. Searching the town for the most learned and appropriate reviewer therein resident the editor chose the Rev. Dr. John Archibald MacCallum, pastor of the Walnut Street Presbyterian Church!

§ 17

No. 2967.—The world presents itself to me, not chiefly as a complex of visual sensations, but as a complex of aural sensations. The fact explains many of my prejudices and weaknesses—for example, my defective appreciation of pictures. It explains something a good deal more elusive: my peculiar taste in women. I seldom give much heed to the faces and forms of women, and I never notice their clothes. But when a woman has a low-pitched and soft voice, with a good clang-tint, she is free to consume my wealth and waste my time whenever the spirit moves her.

§ 18

No. 2,968.—The more highly civilized the man, the more he admires women who are beneath him. The more highly civilized the woman, the more she admires men who are above her.

§ 19

Beating the Tom-Tom.—The net effect of large advertising campaigns, so far as I can make out, is simply to befuddle the booboisie with standards and criteria that are unsound and deceptive. Consider, for example, the national taste in hard liquors before the war. In New York, almost wholly as a result of circus-like advertising, the average bibulus, when he drank rye whiskey, drank Hunter or Wilson, and when he yearned for gin ordered Gordon, and when his soul craved rum nominated Bacardi. Was there any actual superiority in Hunter and Wilson? There was not. Both were blended whiskeys, and hence predominantly bad ones. No congenital whiskey drinker down in Maryland, where they came from, ever drank either. The native bibuli, then as now, drank only straight whiskeys, and they always preferred the brands of inconspicuous little country distilleries.

I am myself no connoisseur of whiskeys, but when it comes to gin I have a certain gift. It convinced me long ago that Gordon was one of the poorest gins on the American market. To name only one that was enormously better, there was the brand of Steel, in Philadelphia. Moreover, Steel put up his gin in full quarts, not in fifths. Nevertheless, advertising made all the boobs drink Gordon, and even today they prefer the bootleg imitations of it to the bootleg imitations of any other brand. Some time ago a bottle dealer told me that he could get \$45 a gross for empty Gordon bottles from the bootleggers. Since then the price has gone so much higher that various enterprising glassblowers have begun to manufacture forgeries. The Gordon sold by the bootleggers, of course, is much worse than the original. It is simply half wine spirits and half water, with a few drops of essential oils to flavor it. Yet such is the magic of an advertised trademark that it brings from \$50 to \$60 a case in New York, and the supply is

never half great enough to meet the demand.

§ 20

No. 2,969.—God is just. He has reserved most of the prettiest legs for homely women.

§ 21

Optimistic Note.—One thing that I have learned in my journey through this vale is to avoid taking the apparent agonies of men too seriously. Nine times out of ten I have discovered, on maudlinly offering my sympathy to this or that victim of man or God, that he was not nearly so used up as I had supposed. I doubt that the Russians suffer half as badly from their famine as they seem to suffer at a distance of 5,000 miles; the reports to the contrary are chiefly sent home by professional uplifters and tear-squeezers whose jobs depend upon the generosity of the tender-hearted. Nor do I believe that the Armenians are a fourth as ill-used by the Turks and Kurds as American missionaries report; these missionaries, in the main, are simply liars; they lie to the Armenians about Heaven and they lie to the Americans about the Armenians. It is only a few months ago that a fresh crop of sickening tales about the atrocities of the Turks began to appear in the American newspapers. Soon afterward it became known that their author was a deliberate and unmitigated liar.

During the war I visited what is now the temporary republic of Poland and had an opportunity to inspect the Polish Jews on their native heath. These Jews had been through half a dozen so-called pogroms under Russian rule, and were now suffering vast and intolerable hardships (as the American papers reported) under German rule. I found them a fat, prosperous and apparently happy people. When I went into the market-place where they carried on business they grinned, inquired about America, and then tried to swindle me.

They had made a great deal of money out of the Russians during the early part of the war, and they were now making even more out of the Germans. In fact, practically all of the money in the country was getting into their hands. In their synagogue I saw enough silverware openly displayed to load a freight-car. And these were the Jews who had been massacred and pillaged by the Russians, the Poles and the Germans! When I got home I found that the usual committee of professional Jewish charity-mongers in New York was collecting a fund to save them, and filling the newspapers with horrible stuff about their sufferings.

In the years 1916 and 1917 I wasted a great deal of painful sympathy upon the young fellows herded into conscript camps. Eight out of ten of them, as the records show, went into uniform reluctantly; I pictured to myself the agony of the more civilized minority, penned up with wops, kikes, yokels and other such dirty fellows. Well, it now turns out that my tears were all shed for nothing. The victims really enjoyed it, and were, in fact, proud of the chance to serve, as anyone may find out by attending a meeting of the American Legion and listening to the speeches. Those who tried to evade the draft were only transiently reluctant. Instantly they got into uniform, their one hope and prayer was to be sent overseas at once, that they might slaughter the Hun without delay. Today not a word ever comes out of them about the evils of conscription. In most American towns, indeed, a man who openly denounced conscription would be tarred and feathered by the members of the Legion—the same fellows I thought of as suffering damnably no more than six years ago.

In 1918 I made another such mistake: I felt sorry for the rank and file

of the German Army, who, after more than four years of terrific struggle, faced a disastrous defeat. But my agents in Germany report that these veterans actually came home in the best of spirits, and that they are full of hope and optimism today. The fact that they are at last living under a democracy, that Johann Schmidt is now just as good a man as General von Hindenburg, is so agreeable to them that it obliterates all memory of the peace terms, and even of the war itself. They are getting more wages than they ever got before, and they work less. Every night there is a political meeting to attend, and once a month or so there is a strike. Germany, in truth, becomes a sort of Utopia of working-men, and a Utopia of profiteers no less. The only Germans who seem to be down in spirits are the Junkers. They fought harder in the war than any other class, and suffered greater losses, and now they are getting less reward.

The Irish are another people who used to keep me awake at night. It seemed to me intolerable that a nation containing so many good poets and pretty girls should be hag-ridden by the British Black-and-Tans. Every time a report came in that the English had raided another grammar-school and butchered master and pupils, or hanged an old woman for wearing a green petticoat, or executed a couple of university professors for signing a Declaration of Independence, I was affected unpleasantly and could not sleep. Then, at last, the English threw up the sponge and went home—and immediately the Irish, free by God's grace, picked up the bayonets of the departing oppressors and began slaughtering one another! In brief, I had been grossly in error when I assumed that butchery was disagreeable to them. The truth was that they actually liked it.



The Rat of the One-Night Stands

By Paul Tanaquil

I

MAURICE climbed into the car next to Violet, loosed the brake and murmured a polite platitude about the beauty of the night. He was glad that she was going to do the driving; it would be easier for him to abandon his mind to the thoughts he wished to untangle and reassert in his confused brain. Every now and then he could break the silence with a serviceable banality; she would think him wrapped in lyric dreams and would disregard the bromidic expression of what she imagined to be creative meditations. He congratulated himself on the fact that she knew he was a poetaster; for the first time in his life it was being advantageous.

Violet, for her part, was no less pleased with his speechlessness. She had been dancing hard and she was hot; conversation would be an effort, besides intruding upon the intimacy of their soundless companionship. It was an agreeable change from the empty banter of other men at similar times; moreover Maurice was watching her with what she believed was admiration. She was very proud of the way she handled an automobile; she drove, she was pleased to know, like a man. And Maurice would probably consider her silence due to a grateful rehearsing in her memory of the pleasant contacts of the evening. She abandoned herself to her enjoyment of the breeze and wondered whether he would try to kiss her before they reached Oakland.

In a car parked next to theirs a

drunken party, composed of two floor-walkers from Taft and Penoyer's department store and two co-educated sophomores from the University at Berkeley, had reached the convivial stage where it was *au fait* to intone the saga of Lydia Pinkham. "The Bottle Hymn of the Republic," thought Maurice. Violet laughed at the chorus, and for a moment Maurice was afraid she would assure him that she had not heard the verse, but mercifully she backed the car out and they were on the highroad. As they turned the bend, Maurice looked back at the Canyon Inn; through the orange-lit window he could see shadowy pairs swaying in intimate unison to the languorous lilt of the fiddles, and a ribald laugh from the Laokoön-like group in the car outside the inn attested to the amatory triumph of polite commerce over democratic education.

He sighed. There was a long silence.

"It's been perfectly lovely," whispered Violet.

Maurice agreed heartily and returned to his thoughts, while she wondered how soon he was going to remark upon her ability as a driver.

II

HE was annoyed, in a way, at being next to her; annoyed that he had gone out with her at all. There was plenty of work demanding his attention at home; there were other girls, even if he really had wished to go out that evening, who offered more amusement. Virginia, for example,

was a better dancer and her conversation was of a nature to stimulate him for its ingenuous vapidness; Lura had a finer figure and her attempted worldliness took all the sting out of her vulgar jokes; Elizabeth was more pulchritudinous and had the frank courage of her sensual convictions.

After all, Violet had little to offer him. If she was keenly intelligent, which he did not deny, she was also mentally hamstrung. Did not most of her social creeds subscribe to the ethics of the *jeunesse dorée* of the Transbay cities? God! what a phrase! And even when her better taste led her to finer things, she seemed to be apologizing lest she be considered high-brow. Most of her male friends went to a symphony concert only to kid the comely ushers in the corridor. Why in the name of fortune was he bothering about her.

It was her letter that had done it, of course. And yet, mature deliberation assured him that this letter of hers was part and parcel of her nature. The girl was transparent, as much in her writing as in her actions. Why should that senseless crink in his character urge him always to seek for hidden qualities under perfect clarities? Why was he always quixotically hoping to find under the hard shell of the exterior something warm and clinging and poignant?

That was it, though: the letter. Almost he knew it by heart.

It began in the damnably silly manner of most notes of the sort. The climate and atmosphere of Honolulu were lovely and she would like to see how he would perform there. "*Even poor I,*" Violet had written, "*perform beautifully, because you get away with anything.*" Which, being interpreted, no doubt meant that some blond ass of a Cavalry subaltern had been kissing her violently on the terrace of a hotel decorated like the inside of a Norddeutscher-Lloyd steamer. "*Lord! but I've had an education!*"

She was retailing her reaction to

Hawaiian beauty in terms of a newly enfranchised flapperette. Nothing surprised her any more, though she believed that her attitude on her return would surprise others. She flattered herself that he would be interested; but why he? Had she written so to the Lord Seymours of Oakland, Berkeley and Alameda or was it to him only because he was what she considered advanced and intellectual? But surely not: women, thought Maurice, are never impersonal. There was a fly in the ointment somewhere. Perhaps, he imagined, because once, to relieve the tedium of University actors ham-fattening their way through "Beyond the Horizon," he had held her hand. But it had been moist and he had let it go. He had never kissed her; had she thought he had wanted to? Good Heavens! They had been out together four times in two years: no modern youth lets the grass grow so thick and so high under his feet.

Back to the letter. "*Seriously, Maurice, I'd give anything to talk to you again: I'm beginning to wonder if the men in Europe have any Honolulu in them!*"

As Maurice recalled sentence after sentence in the same vein, he grew more and more annoyed. He began to see the business in its true light again. Here was merely a girl, who, before abandoning a flirtation in one continent was assuring herself of its continuance in another, with a different protagonist. Probably while she wrote the letter she was feeling wistful. The kisses of the Cavalry fellow made her appreciate what Maurice's might be; and in the very act of writing she was enjoying the deception she was practising on the other man.

Maurice remembered a letter he had received in Grenoble five years before from a lady whose husband was extremely jealous, and as he searched his memory, it seemed to him that the accents of Violet's were not unlike what those of Madame

Motier-Levasseur had been. It was, in a word, the difference between the Marseillaise and "The Star-Spangled Banner."

"Have a cigarette?" asked Maurice.

III

THERE was something hard about her. It was not that she drank much, smoked much or told dirty stories, which was the technical equipment of the would-be fast girl of her class. Perhaps, thought Maurice, the trouble was that she did not. What was hard in her was the conscious attitude of not seeming to care especially for anything or anybody. She was direct: she played so good a game of golf that Maurice had never wished to play with her; she drove a car like a man—should he tell her?—she smoked well, when she was sure nobody she knew would see her do it.

But beside all this, Maurice was certain there must be something else. A woman surely expresses herself always in terms of a man: Maurice hated to think she did in terms of some of the crude youths in whose company she had been seen by him. This voyage to Honolulu had perhaps opened her eyes. She had realized how beneath her were most of her friends, and her letter to Maurice had been a gesture, inviting him.

Her eyes had in them, often, what Maurice read as desire. When he himself looked at a woman in a certain way he was sure that he gave himself away. It was not anything so gross as the expression of a middle-aged man mentally undressing a girl: it was frank, it merely avowed admiration and a wish to possess. Was it not the same with her? Then, too, there was her dancing; her body seemed to melt into his as he held her, but she always remained quite unabashed at the suggestions of it all.

Maurice recalled their early acquaintance: how for a year they had rubbed coeducative shoulders through a seminar in Dante. He remembered

one or two plays and concerts they had gone to, and how she had appeared to him to be surrendering herself with utter abandonment to the influence of every dramatic or musical stimulus to her emotions. He thought of one or two men to whom he had presented her; immediately they had been attracted by her and she had seemed to reciprocate. And invariably they had gone out with her, somewhere, to dance in San Francisco or dine out at some road-house, but, equally invariably there had been one only such party. She had made engagements for a second time, but she had always telephoned to say that she had been playing golf all day and was tired and could she be excused? Even with him, she had done it, and his association with her had been eminently platonic.

Maurice glanced at her, wondering exactly why it was so. They were climbing a hill now, at forty miles an hour. The wind caught a mesh of her hair protruding from under her hat and blew it over the side of her face. Her eyes, fixed almost too directly upon the road in front of her, shone with the exhilaration of pressing on through the cool evening and with the conscious satisfaction that he was looking at her with more than casual admiration. Maurice found himself wondering, as the car passed the crest of the hill and left the White Pergola behind, whether she was expecting him to speak or act. A sudden glimpse of the moon drew his attention, and then he returned to his reasonings.

Platonic, yes. But why? He knew that if he had made no advances to Violet, it was not because he was unwilling. Her appeal was frank. The variation of that appeal was due to the character upon which it was exercised. For the gross man, Violet was a body, for himself, while he was well aware of the indefinable power to move him that her physical attractiveness created, still there was far more. Her attitude of indifference

irritated him, but he sometimes saw in it an imperfect expression of something very much rarer and finer, something which others missed. Or was he merely a refinedly high-sentiment sensualist? Oh, damn!

Then he remembered Larry Parker.

"Have you seen Larry since you got back?" he asked.

She answered no, and from her answer he sensed that she was uncomfortable. She was probably wondering just how much Larry had told him about her.

"You know you're dead wrong about Larry," he went on, picking up the threads of a conversation begun earlier, "I've seen him a lot, lately. He's rather splendid, sometimes!"

She questioned him about Larry, commented upon his handsome appearance, mentioned his eyes and confessed that she had been quite ready to admire him immensely at one time. As Maurice recalled what Larry had told him of Violet, he recognized that there was in her mind behind her words a double sentiment. Partly annoyance and a tenuous vestige of shame at having allowed herself to be justly taken to task, and partly the curiosity of a woman whose vanity has been flattered by the knowledge that her charm reacted upon a strong and simple nature with force sufficient to move him to insult her. But she stepped viciously on the throttle and as Maurice watched the speedometer rising . . . thirty-five . . . forty . . . forty-five . . . fifty . . . he repeated in his mind the account Larry had given him.

IV

LARRY had met her at tea, in Maurice's house in Berkeley, the winter before. He had been immediately captivated. Maurice laughed as he recollected Larry's embarrassment when he asked Violet's telephone number. As if, almost, he feared Maurice was un-

willing to give him the right number.

"We went out to dance," Larry told him later, "and when we came back . . ." the narrative continued in fine masculine idiom. There was a sheer healthy pungency about it, which Maurice regretted was generally marred by the Puritan heritage of Larry's fellow-countrymen. The sum and substance of it seemed to have been that after the excitement of the licensed corps-à-corps of the modern dance, the usual "petting-party" had occurred. The American girl, Maurice well knew, had the courage of her convictions only to a certain point. Uncompromisingly amorous, her emotions never reached the climax one would expect. Possibly, by dint of wearing away her desire in innumerable small caresses, infinitely suggestive but always controlled, she never felt anything deeply enough to overstep the line, clearly marked in her mind, between what was permissible and what was not. America was a country ruled and overridden by women, whose almost demoniac guile, playing upon men whom they had debauched by sentimentalization, built up about them a cloud of idealized regard and surrounded their heads with haloes of cheaply Platonic veneration.

How clever they were, how clever! First, they raised themselves to a pedestal a little less exalted but vastly more actual than God's. Next, they descended ever so slightly from it and bathed in the gratefully warm waters of kindly condescension. Then, with every lure and every blandishment at their disposal short of absolute surrender, to the entire satisfaction of their own senses, they played the subtle temptress, with vast enjoyment of both their skill and their gratification. Finally, they retreated behind the adamant wall which had first girded them about.

It was the perfect evolution of the Puritan ideal: mystic, benevolent, quasi-Lothario and finally idealistic but practical moralist; the protagon-

ist was actor, producer, audience and critic in one. It had been that very pliancy in appearance but rigidity in fact, that veneration for the letter and prostitution of the spirit of the law, that had built up enormous cities and reared gigantic civilizations. But it was also that creed of right and wrong that had bound the giant's hands and shorn his hair, so that, great as he was in stature and strength, his soul and his heart were pitifully dwarfed.

Larry, however, was somewhat different. He had knocked about the world more widely, even, than Maurice himself. He had farmed, freelance, in Minnesota; he had herded cattle in Montana, he had been to sea and had caught visions of the South Seas, of India, of Egypt. With the great charm of a winsome appearance and a courteous regard, he was immeasurably superior to most of his fellows in the University. Little read as he was, he none the less sensed the wastage and the sham that accompanied too often the genuine ideal of democratic education.

And the gist of his story was that, having followed out the code of the collegian, having exchanged all the amenities of upper-middle-class social pseudo-amour, he folded his arms akimbo, stared at Violet and interrogated her.

"What now?" was the way he put it, and she was at a loss how to answer. She was not entirely anxious to bid him good night and cut short an evening which was now reaching its most interesting moment for herself; she was, further, curious as to what he meant to do. Any offense she might have felt was of little matter compared with the subtle flattery and the desire to experiment.

He spoke quite dispassionately at first, pointing out to her that after an evening of the sort, she could hardly expect him to shake hands, kiss conventionally and go home. She had led him on, she had given him to expect something. And so, he stood

there quite quietly, honestly, unphased. Now what?

He expected her to be either offended or else acquiescent, but she was neither. She liked him—his eyes when he talked to her stirred something in her, his arm around her waist was strong, masculine. She liked him especially because of her victory over him, his question betokened her triumph. And so she put her arms about his neck, drew down his face to hers and kissed him, simply, with cool lips. And she whispered to him: "Not tonight!" But in her words he saw an evasion; he was alert enough to know that this postponement was infinite. So while he kissed her lips, his pride restrained him from attempting to force the issue. And, paradoxically, like a woman, while he placed his hands behind his back and stared urbanely at her, in a torrent of tremulous words she was begging him to calm himself, not to be so impetuous.

At another time, he might have listened. The puissant lure of the unknown, the irresistible hope beyond reasoned knowledge would have beckoned him on. He might have continued to move her, and then, just before she would remonstrate with him and retreat, he might have left her, calmly, with all the interest on her side and the victory on his. He might have acted the part of the disappointed lover whose ardor is unrequited. But he saw through her and he refused to take any but the logical action.

As she stood before him in a corner of the porch, next to the front door of her house, he compared her with a rat. There was something immensely active about her, together with a sharpness and a swiftness. She wanted food to satisfy her hunger and drink to slake her thirst, but she did not seek them openly. She crept after them, pounced upon them and took them to her only when absolute safety was assured. She was rodent and parasitic. Her desire was im-

mense; she gratified it on a scale that fear alone kept from being immense. That was it: fear. She was dead afraid. She knew the power of the urge gnawing at her, she realized the impossibility of ever restraining it if she were potently stirred. A huge want, a griping hunger, an ingrown fear. So she prowled . . . warily . . . by night.

Everybody who had ever been out with her once had been disappointed on a second occasion. She feared that an advantage gained upon a previous party would be too mighty a factor in a man's favor, would embolden him to such a point that she would be swept away before the vigor of his onslaught.

"She went in," said Larry, "for one-night stands!" Months elapsed and then she began again, but the interval brought her an experience by mere force of numbers that was invaluable.

As Maurice thought of Larry and Violet, he wondered how it was that a man could be taken in more than once by the same woman. Any number of women could deceive a man once, but the same woman to deceive a man twice! Did not experience ever teach a man to do anything save place no trust in it? Maurice began to pity Larry as a victim, until suddenly he realized how much more serious an offender he was himself. He was caught, tonight. Caught by a rat! Thank God he had not made an ass of himself by flirting with the rat of the one-night stands! If he were careful . . . careful. . . .

V

VIOLET, it was, who broke the silence.

"I shall not be so unoriginal," she said, "as to say the usual 'A penny for your thoughts!'"

He laughed her off.

"The appropriate thing for you to answer was that they are worth ever so much more!"

Silence. Again she tried:

"I would be afraid to tell you mine!" she volunteered.

Rat . . . rat . . . rat!

VI

MAURICE reflected that if he made no advance, it was due to no lack of desire on his part. It was circumstance, inhibition, pride on his account because he knew there was fear on hers. If he seemed to be asking something which she not too willingly but still surely withheld from him, then hers was the victory. Yet in a way he wanted to tell her he loved her. He would like to kiss her; to have her lithe arms about his neck; to feel her cool flesh under his lips as he grazed her cheek, seeking her mouth; to sense against his chest the rise and fall of her high, firm breast as her breath came in little, quick spasms.

Had not Larry done it? He had been victor, too. Who knows but that if he had persevered . . .? Maurice was certain Violet expected him to kiss her. Was it not woman who always did the pursuing? Man was adulated, flattered, made to think he wanted something supremely; tinsel was held before his eyes, and because it dangled almost out of his reach, because a wisp of sentimental fog hung between him and the trash, the fool imagined it to be gold. He desired Violet in a mildly tender way only; a huge wave of wistfulness swept over him and left him with an almost impersonal hunger for the small, soft words of women. Almost he felt toward her as one might toward a child, a child with bright eyes and a curious, deft peer like a rat's. Was this sentimental? Then perhaps he was a sentimentalist. But wasn't sentimentality the act of attaching an undue importance to sentiment? In that case he was not: the very modesty of his desire freed him from that charge. Could Violet appreciate what he felt, he wondered.

Well, then—marriage? It would

be pleasant to marry Violet. He did not for a moment doubt his ability to win her. He realized that a man can arrive at anything with determination: achievement was measured solely by perseverance. Violet would make an excellent wife, even with children. He could not see her exclusively devoted to a brat, sunk into the beautiful, noble but banal existence of perfect motherhood. She was too finely direct and free-lance for that. No: she would go on golfing in her smashing way, driving her car just as she was doing, living as beautiful and open and clear as a summer sky. The only real trouble with her now was in her attitude toward men, and marriage would put an end to that. Nebulously he imagined her in tweeds drinking gin-fizzes on a country-club porch, or teaching a scrawny infant how to putt on the drawing-room carpet of an orange-curtained bungalow. There would be nothing domestic about her home and she would never allow herself to grow fat and untidy.

He had thought of her as a rat. Why, the very quality was in her favor. Mice became stout, unwieldy, wheezy and they were caught; but rats retained to the very end their zest for living.

Should he speak to her? Should he lean across, put his arm about her, suggest they stop to look at the view? Maurice thought of it dispassionately: that was the way he would want to get married, in a vigorous, sheer rat-like way. He moved toward her.

"I hope I don't have to put the brake on," she whispered as she sunk deep into the seat. Her knees reached up almost to the steering-wheel, her head lay back against the cushion behind her, one of her hands was almost on the gear-shift, close, quite close to his, folded across his knees.

"I would have a hard time reaching it," she murmured.

She was speaking in a low, far-off

voice, out of the depths of a comfortable lassitude, out of a languor that might be propitious. She peered dreamily at the darkness before them.

Should he? Should he?

VII

SUDDENLY he caught sight of the gold moon, hanging low over the brow of Mount Diablo, and, being pledged to platitudes for the evening, he remarked on it to Violet.

"It looks exactly like a medal, doesn't it?"

And that brought into his mind the French proverb of *le revers de la médaille!* There are both sides of it, and especially in America, the shining gold may be faced, on the other side, with putty and plaster. A Queen Ann front and Mary Anne rear, one might say.

What was the reverse picture of marriage with Violet?

He resumed. She was too resilient to become president of the district Ebell Club or something of the sort; she lacked the instinct of the society woman. Again, though she might draw, paint or compose rather well—he knew of it only by hearsay—she could never be a very genuine artistic or intellectual figure. Nor, finally, would she ever flop into a well-cushioned and proud *momma*. No matter what happened to her or whom she married, she would always for him remain the rat.

He saw her playing for several years. One after another, the men passed with all the swift glamor of the one-night stand and its consequent emptiness. Such a life as she would lead, until she finally did marry, was like that of a theatre: bright with music and color and light for an evening, but in the morning a thing of melancholy, fearful almost. One by one her friends would marry.

She would go to their weddings, dance at their balls and help them choose cretonnes for their houses, until, one day, when the last and dearest

disappeared from the horizon of their companionship, she would come to acknowledge, desperately, that it was time for her. And finally she would fall into the arms of some man and realize that she should have been less indifferent, but she would be thankful it was not too late.

At last the rat would be lured out into the open. For a few weeks or months or years, even, the novelty of life shared with another, the happiness so determinedly expected by others of newly wedded people might satisfy her. But soon she would look back over the past few years and she would recognize an enormous and bitter wastage. She would see how all her fine energy had been too widely disseminated. If only she could have gone through with anything to the end? If only she could have acted surely accordingly to her instincts? If only she had not forced down her feelings? If only she had not been afraid?

Presently, conscious of it or not, she would begin to hold against her husband what faults were his. By comparison with the now idealized qualities of the men she might have had but did not, the merest idiosyncrasies of her husband or the lack of them would take on the appearance of defects. The very fact that she had been obliged to give in to him and to marry him would become a cause for resenting him. He would be a walking monument, testifying to her regretted restraint. The rat would gnaw at the bonds of matrimony with dolorous, sharp teeth, but futile for fear.

Wherever and whenever she could, she would snatch at amusement, hilarity, excitement. There would be something hectic and unhealthy about her feverish pursuit of pleasure. She would dance mostly with younger men, bachelors. At first

they would be flattered by her attention, drawn along by her verve; but their naïveté would be unable to explain the unnatural quality of her gaiety, and they would leave her for the more familiar normality of *débütante* or *divorcée*. Some of them, for a very little while, might scent the possibility of an affair with her. She was a pretty, excitable, discontented wife. But they would none of them succeed; and almost none of them would ever ascribe their failure to her fear.

So, gradually, though her eyes remained bright, there would be small wrinkles at their corners; she would have to put more and more rouge on her cheeks; her laughter would grow more shrill. Youth would succeed youth, swiftly and yet more swiftly. Always there would be the great hunger, always the speculation upon its gratification and always the cowardice to prevent it. Married men might even counsel their younger brothers—married men who themselves had been through it but had not understood—for fear that there might perhaps be a scandal. One never knew. . . .

"Here we are at home!" sighed Violet.

"By Jove! what a flock of angels have been passing over us!" Maurice remarked.

"It's been lovely, Maurice," she said as they shook hands.

He was quite calm as he bade her good night. In her eyes he imagined he saw gleaming a little light of hope. Then, as she noted his matter-of-factness, a mist of disappointment. Or was it only that he was a man, and a very conceited man at that!

"Good night, Violet!" he said.

VIII

Poor rat!



The Inner Thralldom

By Carter Brooke Jones

I

EDWIN HAWARDAN, the governor of the state, raised his aching head from the pillow and rested it on his elbow. He then kicked the cover from him and elevated his knees at a precarious angle. The bed had become thoroughly uncomfortable. It was a warm, brooding night, black, haunted by sudden gusts of rain, followed by oppressive stillness.

The governor had a hang-over. It added a culminating touch to the depression that had colored darkly the recent months. The hang-over was, it might be said, the torch that led his rebellious procession of thoughts toward the citadel of action.

"Damn it!" said the governor.

Everything was wrong. In the first place, his head was spinning about on a painful axis. He couldn't recall a worse hang-over, and he'd had many. The night was as cheerless, as futile, as life itself. He felt as if he had just waked from a lachrymously sentimental dream. He had the frightened small boy's desire for a friendly voice, a reassuring touch. He even wished that his wife were beside him, as often as he had waked to be annoyed at finding her there. But she was out of town. His loneliness was acute. And he was afraid—not of anything in particular. Which is the worst sort of fear.

There was nothing to be done. He couldn't cure the hang-over. Not a drop in the house! That was the most disagreeable feature of this horrible, absurd, hypocritical Prohibition. Half the time one didn't have an eye-opener.

The cellars of the executive mansion were empty. This last private party had exhausted the slender resources of the gubernatorial stock. He remembered draining regretfully the last of the Scotch before dinner, the final bottle of wine late in the evening. A governor had to be careful these days, when the reformers, who ran the country, were ready to pounce on any public official who didn't appear to observe all their innumerable laws. He couldn't have liquors shipped into the mansion by the truck load. They had to be smuggled in a bottle or two at a time—with extreme caution when Mrs. Hawardan was at home. She had been raised a shouting Methodist and remained one at heart, though she now considered it more dignified to go to the Episcopal church. She held a drink to be one of Satan's favorite pleasures, which no doubt it is.

Well, it served a man right for holding office. He deserved all he got and more. Besides, he—Edwin Hawardan—laughed mirthlessly at his own hypocrisy. He pretended to stand for all these reforms. He had to, for he, representing the executive branch of government, was sworn to uphold all damn-fool laws, federal and state. Furthermore, let him assume a compromising attitude toward any of them, and his political head would roll into the bourgeois basket next morning. Things had come to the pass where a man was afraid to appeal to the intelligent minority. It was impotent—almost legendary.

Afraid! That was it. Why was he such a coward? Why had he been all these years? Because he wanted—

what? Distinction, advancement, comfort. Did he have them?

"Oh, hell," murmured the governor, over and over, with the soft, caressing inflection of a term of endearment.

Then there was his head. If it would go ahead and split—then, without a head to trouble him, he would be at peace, he would cease to think, would become an ideal governor.

So he had desired political achievement, statesmanship? It would be more truthful to say his wife had desired such a course, and he had been, as always, too weak to resist. She had got him in the habit of pushing himself toward these unworthy, meaningless goals. They were not what he would have chosen. He could look back and say honestly that he had been happier as an obscure criminal lawyer in a great city. He had taken a cynical delight in saving from punishment some of the most arrant scoundrels.

II

HE lay back in bed, tossing miserably. It was worse lying down, and he propped himself up again. Whooo-ooo, howled the wind. Tap-tap-tap came the rain against the windows. He had closed them of necessity, and the room was stuffy. Down the street the clock in the tower of the capitol boomed four times.

The governor swore in a subdued but fluent way, like a man saying his prayers. So that was the hour? He had hoped it was nearly six. This meant two or three hours before the late autumn daylight. Would this dreadful night never end?

He found his slippers and padded over to a window. Toward the capitol a single street light flickered feebly in the gusty darkness.

This was a fine town to have to live in, Mr. Hawardan reflected. Why were such hopeless villages chosen for state capitals? Now that the legislature was in session, it was less endurable than in its dull normality. It was filled with thinly urbane yokels who with great airs

called themselves senator and representative; with shrewdly dull lobbyists; with less intelligent hangers-on; with all the most boresome elements of the state's citizenry.

The governor pulled down the shade and switched on a light. He went into the bathroom and mixed himself a bromo-seltzer, which he gulped with a vicious expression. Then he returned to sit on the bed, his head throbbing, his thoughts running on.

What possible advantage was there in being governor? The salary wasn't enough to maintain his wife's social status, much less buy him any little comforts. Each year he sank deeper in debt. Even if one were inclined to stoop to graft, it couldn't be done safely. There were watchdogs in the form of public-spirited citizens, social idealists, persons with a mission in life. The honor?

"Tosh!" growled the governor, and worse.

To live in this town, and stand what every governor stood—was there any redeeming feature? None he could see.

"Oh, my head," he added. "One shot of Bourbon— But what's the use?"

A governor was without real authority, denied permission to think for himself or for anyone else. He wore the cloak of dignity which was thrown over such impressive occasions as the opening of national conventions and of new highways. He was an automaton in a high hat saying correct things, doing what was right, standing foursquare for God, for the great American morality, the home, the Volstead Act, the hangman, the penitentiary, the virtue of hard work and low wages—for all the other things - for - which - our - forefathers - fought-and-died.

Edwin Hawardan chuckled bitterly. He had played the part well. The mirror told him that even now, seated on the side of the bed in lavender pajamas, with a hang-over, he was still a governor. Unconsciously he had folded his arms in the stilted posture he assumed in public addresses. His cold gray eyes, which he had trained to look piercingly into crowds, gleamed beneath heavy

eyebrows. His large, slightly crooked nose and his tall, massive frame gave him a typical appearance. He seemed a symbol of right-thinking. He would have looked like a governor—or a headwaiter—anywhere. That was one reason his party had insisted upon making him governor. And he had the additional asset of being able to utter the most vacuous platitudes with the impressiveness of a prime minister announcing epochal news.

He had assumed so long and so faithfully that attitude of conformity that he had come almost to believe in it. Days had passed when he had been too immersed in the duties of governor to have even a private thought. He had wondered sometimes whether the standards of the masses did not actually represent his own convictions, whether the secret scoffings, the undercurrent of cynicism, that gave him many an inward laugh, meant anything but perversity, a pointless desire to consider himself "different." Yet, more often, he had realized that his happiest moments were those passed in sneaking off and reading Anatole France, in snickering behind a mask of stern sympathy at some delegation from a woman's club for the promotion of righteousness, or in saying what he pleased to one of those rare spirits among his friends who understood.

This morning no pragmatic doubts bothered him. He was in revolt against all existing institutions, all dominant tendencies.

III

BONG! It was 4:30. A violent swish of rainy wind rattled the windows. It would be at least seventeen hours before daylight, he decided. He began to pad about restlessly, his nerves having waked to pernicious activity.

Why had he chosen this night of all others to celebrate by drinking himself into a state of misery? At 11 o'clock he had to read his message to the legislature—the message that was popularly supposed to lead the session in the way it should go. It meant, of course, merely requesting the state's lawmakers to

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pass the measures they already had decided on in preliminary caucuses of the reigning party and had instructed him to ask them to adopt. Yet it required that he stand solemnly before a joint meeting of the two houses; that he read with his usual applause-evoking force. How could he do it feeling as if his head didn't belong to him, like he would yell if someone touched him suddenly? Would he be all right before noon? No, experience told him, not unless he found Doc Fay, or somebody else capable of providing several long drinks. Well, he'd have to find Doc or somebody. Meanwhile—misery.

He went to the table and picked up a manuscript, typed impeccably, bound with an elaborate cover. It was the message. He turned back the pages idly, reading random phrases and sentences. His rage, turning inward, burst into flame.

. . . Members of the legislature, our State University, our public school system, must be 100 per cent. American.

The governor clapped his hands in mock applause.

"Rats!" he added. "What that means is that our schools are not by any chance to put their students in the way of thinking for themselves. But every governor's message has to have that in it."

The professor who is a parlor bolshevist will better employ his talents in Soviet Russia than in poisoning the minds of our youth against our sacred institutions.

"What is a parlor bolshevist?" the governor asked himself. "I'm damned if I know. I'll write Lenin and ask him. Our sacred institutions! Yeah, Prohibition's one. If I were a teacher I would go to Russia; I'd try being ruled by a new set of demagogues for a while."

He turned over three pages tearing them slightly in his self-indignation.

. . . Undoubtedly the Mann Act should be supplemented by a state measure making such transportation between cities a felony.

"The Presbyterian delegation from Skanaman County has drawn that measure. Old Senator Dorgan, the sponsor of it, has an awful pull. He's the offi-

cial representative of the Good People, and controls more votes in the legislature than anyone, unless it's Senator Drew of the lumber industry. Old Dorgan made me recommend it. Well, I've been all through Skanaman County and I never saw a girl in it that I'd transport anywhere, unless it was in the opposite direction from where I was going. Besides, Dorgan should be fairly safe from temptation by this time. You don't see the younger legislators clamoring for that law. But likely it will pass, and afford the ladies another rich field for blackmail."

Another page. Taxation. They would promise to reduce taxes, he and the legislature, but, as Goldberg would say, it didn't mean anything.

. . . *We believe in free speech, but destructive radical tendencies must be curbed.*

"In other words, speech is free as long as we agree with it. As a matter of fact, most of these agitators think for themselves about as much as a congressman or a governor. They repeat dogmas. Yet there's no reason why we of the governing class should have a corner in platitudes. Once in a while, too, some dissenter really has ideas. It's the only way ideas ever occur—rejection of the prevailing notion."

Therefore I suggest that it is not advisable at this time to modify our Syndicalism law. It has been enforced to the letter, and has greatly curbed dangerous schemes.

"I'll say it has! It has made martyrs out of a lot of brainless idealists preaching Solidarity, Class War, Justice-to-the-Worker and various other asinine phrases."

. . . *The Prohibition law should be considered an obligation upon all good citizens. . . .*

"It is, all right—an obligation to violate it. . . . I wish they'd abolish hangovers."

The governor rubbed his throbbing head, and threw down the manuscript, too disgusted to read further. His own words! And they offended his civilized sensibilities. It was sardonic.

He had reviewed the worst of the message. The rest was colorless: a love feast; pats on the back for the solons, for himself, for the citizens in general; an optimistic forecast, safely generalized.

The message predicted the program of legislation fairly well. The acts would stay within the bounds of stupid and long-suffering public opinion. More ridiculous bills would be introduced, but they would not pass—not at this session. Measures would be proposed making it a gross misdemeanor to teach evolution; banning the use of tobacco in any form; requiring candidates for matrimony to recite a catechism, the Constitution of the United States and the Book of Deuteronomy. Yet these lawmakers would vote them down, thus declaiming their enlightenment, their liberality. It was droll. Governor Hawardan found himself wishing that everything would be enacted. With a *reductio ad absurdum* of legislation, an *ultra plus non* of personal reformation, perhaps people would stir. But he doubted it, for the present situation was not far removed from those phrases.

Anyhow, why should he care? He wanted now to reform the reformers. Indignation, the curse of America, as ill became one faction as another. He secretly admired toleration. Let him practise it.

But this reflective attitude didn't last. Anger surged through him, again; he sprang up and swung a wicked right hook at a symbolic enemy. He had to be the apology, the official sponsor, for the governmental conduct of this thriving state! It was utterly damnable. He, despising nine-tenths of it, was viewed by the world as its champion. He had sold his mind for the thin gruel of public office. He was tired of this hypocrisy.

It wasn't too late. He'd show them, he'd tell them. A governor, as well as a slave, could revolt.

IV

HE stared thoughtfully down the dim-lit street to the tower of the capitol. He was calm. He had resolved to rebel.

His head still hurt, his nerves were on edge, but his mind was firm. The thing that troubled him was how to do it. If he simply resigned, his political opponents would say it was true then, what the Socialists had said about highway contracts. In fact, it wasn't true. He had considered the possibility of having road bids opened with a little partiality and with a bit of profit to himself, but had decided there wasn't a chance of escaping detection.

He had it. He would stand before the joint session today, before the whole state, so to speak, and hurl his defiance. He would express his contempt for all prevailing rules of conduct, then dare them to impeach him. He could not afford to admit that he had been a hypocrite. Too many other men were. Resenting in him what vaguely disturbed them, they would proclaim him an ass. He could explain that all these years he had believed the stuff he now rejected. He would say he had realized suddenly the hollowness of the entire business. Condemning him, they would respect him.

A recollection assailed him. There was the message. His determination came a little late: copies of the message already had been distributed to the press, to be released this day.

He tapped the manuscript thoughtfully. He could refrain from reading it, notifying the papers that he had decided not to use it. But that would be ridiculous, and his warning probably would not reach some of the papers in time. There was a better plan. He chuckled in anticipation.

He would read the message as scheduled, and then repudiate it, asserting that it was what he was expected to say but represented him in no wise.

He gave the face in the mirror a quizical glance. What kind of a fool would he appear? He turned away with a boyishly mischievous expression. What matter? It would be fun. Let them impeach him. That would be rare sport—a trial for heresy. After all, though, what could they charge him with? Of course he would be through politically

—the party would boil him figuratively in oil, wishing it could be real oil. That was what he wanted, to escape further opportunities to hold office. He would be allowed to lead a private life—so far as a married man could.

What to do afterward gave him pause. He could go back to practising law. Would he be better off? He pondered. At least he could seek as companions those occasional persons who thought for themselves—stimulating friends denied him now. They wouldn't approach a governor for fear of being bored; they would find that as an individual he wasn't a bad sort.

Still—there would be Mrs. Hawardan. Under the conditions of plain citizenship she was more evident. That was perhaps the only advantage of being governor. This adduced a bolder fancy. Need he and Mrs. Hawardan be together always? He caught the fancy, and bounced it in the air like a light, gaudy balloon. He threw out his chest before the mirror, smoothed back his soft gray hair. Nobody could call him old. He was a strong man to whom doubtless remained many years of vigor. Perhaps— Well, who knew?

V

THE clock boomed for 6:30, and a melancholy light had begun to pervade the gusty obscurity.

The governor sat at the table with pen and ink, making occasional notes and glancing anon at a couple of pages sparsely written on with words and more fully ornamented with circles, curves, houses with smoke curling out of them, and odd marks that might mean anything. Every time he wrote a phrase he laughed aloud with an insane emphasis.

Finally he reread all the notes.

I have said what I was told to say . . . Have reached conclusion am not over ten per cent. American. . . . Make the most of that. . . . This state, like all states in our glorious Union, is perfect flower of democracy, viz., government by a majority, which means government by prejudice, fear, stupidity. . . . Re-

cent idiotic legislation, state and federal, is aimed mostly at restraint of a more or less intelligent minority, which, having civilized instincts, interferes less with others and hence less merits restraint, than any element. . . . Matter of protecting average citizen from aggressions occupying increasingly little attention: prevention and punishment of murder, robbery, rapine has become secondary consideration of peace officers. Spend more time trying make people lead clean Christian lives, promising them jail now and hell later if they don't. It might be argued this is preventive measure, gradually precluding crime by bettering individual character. But fallacy of that is propaganda of purity doesn't prevent such aggressions. Only effect is to annoy people.

He concluded that these notes would be a sufficient guide. He could expand them into a fair speech. His courtroom training had made him an extemporaneous speaker of no mean parts.

"It has become a much worse crime in this state," he could hear himself saying, "for one to possess a quart of distilled spirits or to give natural expression to some normal instinct than to crush out an inoffensive life with cold calculation. The police will chase you farther and catch you sooner for being convivial or unorthodoxly amorous than for being a murderer or a footpad."

It would be rich, he decided, the consternation on the faces in the audience.

If, meanwhile, his head would ease a little, his nerves quiet down, life would seem much less terrible. But he still felt like the dregs in a bottle. The dome of the capitol, lifted out of the gloom, suddenly fascinated him. He could not keep his eyes from it. After a time it began to spin around slowly, and then it floated away in the dark dawn, leaving the building quite domeless.

VI

A RAP on the door. The governor looked up with angry guilt. Could he have been asleep? The knock was repeated, in a subdued, apologetic way.

"Well, what do you want?" growled His Excellency.

"It's 8:30," came the respectful voice of his secretary. "I thought maybe you'd overslept, sir. You wanted to be up early, you said."

"Thanks," acknowledged the governor, without undue gratitude in his tone.

Steps retreated down the hall.

The governor took stock of himself. He still felt pretty shaky, though his head was behaving more decently. He remembered with a grimace the message he must read. Then his eyes glimpsed the more recent notes he had written, and he was elated. Would he go through with that little scheme? Just watch him!

A grim determination accompanied his dressing, his descent to the dining-room and his two cups of black coffee.

VII

His office at the capitol was cluttered with visitors. It was almost time for the joint session. Party leaders had gone in for a final word with the governor; lobbyists had peeped in with inane smiles; a woman's delegation representing something or other was blocking the doorway; newspapermen were snooping about to see whether anything unexpected might break. The door between the private office and the reception room was ajar, and the governor stood by his desk bowing and smiling with unusual affability.

"They wouldn't be so cordial," he mused, "if they knew what was about to happen."

What would delight him most, he predicted, would be the editorial tomorrow in *The Banner*, the leading party organ of the state. It would be headed, "The Governor Turns Bolshevik." In the course of its maunderings it would question his sanity.

Old Senator Dorgan caught him by the coat sleeve. That was a habit of Senator Dorgan's and a liberty the governor resented hotly but was forced to endure.

"Ye won't forget them bills of mine," whispered the senator.

"No, no," assured the governor.

"The fac' is, gov'nor," the old man went on, "the folks down in my section is mighty het up about the hull question. We feel that our children ain't safe any more, what with jazz and flappers and the Hollywood movies. Come what may, we must protect our young, unfisticated girls."

Senator Dorgan nudged the governor and leaned over, as if he were about to relate an obscene anecdote. "I'll tell ye what. I know some inside stories that would astound you, gov'nor. Conditions in this state couldn't be much more rotten than what they are. I know the details—the names, the places—everything."

"I'll bet you do," thought the governor. Aloud he said: "I've dealt with your bills in the message, senator, and may have some extemporaneous remarks to add. Don't worry."

VIII

As he read toward the close of his manuscript—the proper governor's message—he studied with occasional comprehensive glances the crowd of legislators on the floor and spectators in the galleries. It seemed to him that these people looked strangely alike. On closer inspection he saw that it was not so, but that it was an illusion caused by a similarity of expression among them. Most of them wore the same pattern of countenance: a bored interest. Apparently they felt this was an occasion of importance which somehow failed to move them. They still hoped, perhaps, that something unusual would occur—a bat fly through the room or a stray dog wander in, it might be—but had no confidence that they would witness any such delightful novelty. Their applause was as meaningless as a casual handshake. It came when it was expected to, like the custom of tipping the hat.

The first qualms, which made him glad he was pleasing the multitude for

a while with the conventional speech, had passed. He faced without fear the floor leaders, the powerful committeemen, the women's delegations, the representatives of the Chambers of Commerce—the very persons to whom he had deferred most. He was knuckling under no longer. A new sense of power thrilled him; it was stronger than that of any of his political triumphs.

Doc Fay had slipped him two drinks just before the assembly. They had helped.

He tossed the manuscript onto the speaker's table, and looked with a sort of pitying contempt at the state's leading politicians, sitting there in their smug sense of security. He knew just about what he was going to say. He gloried in his defiance. He wondered why he had lived so long in bondage to these petty persons, whose approbation was insincere and whose strength was a sham. He would enjoy their discomfiture.

In breaking with them he was spurning a whole world of thoughtless conformity, of blind obedience, of submerged individuality. His revolt was the more pleasant to contemplate because it involved only himself and was not an effort to impose something forcibly on somebody. He realized that it would be the first time he ever had expressed himself, what seemed to him his normal reaction to the things about him. Viewed thus, his action seemed less a grandstand play, less an absurd jumping-up and heel-cracking gesture of contempt for the universe, than an attempt to justify himself to himself. If he were honest in what he supposed to be his philosophy, he should not be ashamed of it, afraid of its consequences. Surely every man was entitled to this self-recognition—at least once.

IX

THEN his eyes, traveling over the galleries, alighted on a row near the top, fixed themselves on a woman. She was dressed with a heavy modishness, and seemed somehow uncomfortable—not

physically, but mentally. She had thrown her brown fur coat carelessly on the back of the seat. Her lorgnette was sighted steadily at the governor. Her lips, drawn thin, expressed a perennial and general disapproval.

It was his wife.

At first he merely was surprised to see her. She had not expected to return—or so she had told him—for two or three days. She evidently had arrived late for the session and had slipped into the gallery seat to hear him discuss Americanism.

Well, what of it? He turned his attention to another part of the legislative chamber. Why should the sudden advent of his wife bother him? Had she remained away she would have learned soon enough of his—defection, as she would call it. As well let her hear it outright.

But his glance returned to her repeatedly as if some force had tilted his head at that angle. He knew then that he could not go through with it—not at this time. . . . he wondered if ever. She had some power that the politicians and the public lacked. His habitual compromises with her—compromises involving every conceivable phase of life, from eggs turned over to metaphysical theories—were not to be disregarded so easily. If he started the daring addendum to his address, he would be turning constantly to her disapproving countenance; he would become confused, probably would crumble into a humiliating spectacle. Too often before, determining to assert himself, he had withered before that look of hers, reduced to the silence of cowardice.

If she had stayed away, he could have declared his independence. But now—

He was held under an inner thrall-dom deeper than he had suspected. She, in her constant dread of nonconformity, would accuse him of staging his little rebellion solely to disgrace her. His life didn't matter, of course! She alone was

to be considered. He damned such tandem schemes of existence. And he had flattered himself that it was an affair concerning only him. Abstractly he disliked the idea of dragging someone else down with him. But he was afraid—that was the concrete point. There was no chivalry involved.

Suddenly he wanted to laugh. He reminded himself of some trite cartoon. He was the culprit husband whose wife had arrived unexpectedly. There she sat, a spiritual rolling-pin in her hand, ready to wield it at the slightest provocation.

The pause had become awkward. The governor, having ended his message and awaited the last echo of applause, had stood for an unpardonably long time, saying nothing, doing nothing. It was puzzling, well-nigh inexplicable. People squirmed in their seats apprehensively. For once in his career the governor, on his feet, was at a loss. He didn't know how to get out of this. He felt that something must be done.

Finally, inspired, he thrust some crumpled papers into his pocket, the notes of his abandoned utterance, and exclaimed:

"I observe that many women are present—not simply as wives, relatives or friends, but as citizens taking a deep interest in our legislation, as citizens at last assigned their rightful part in the law-making of this great state. May I propose that we men, by standing, pay a simple tribute to the womanhood of our state? God bless our women!"

The men stood, in some confusion, and a number waved handkerchiefs at their wives.

The governor used his handkerchief to mop a coldly-sweating brow. Then, catching from the gallery a look not approving, he waved it feebly in that direction, receiving in return a smile that seemed to say, "What are you up to now, that you try to square yourself in this fantastic manner?"



Good Friday

By Dorothea Brande

I

. . . And some Nosey Nellie had come talkin' to my Old Man about me—see?—and by the time I got home he was fit to be tied.

And he says, "So I hear you're goin' around with a Prodestun, hay?" And that got me sore, because he don't pay no attention to me unless he got the dirt on me. Say, he wouldn't care if I die tomorrow, only he wouldn't get his ten a week off me. So I was mad, and I says, "Well, I don't know as you'd call him a Prodestun. His name's Lipschitz," I says—see?

Well, say, you know my father. So he starts tellin' me all he's goin' to do to me if I don't lay off Morris—see—and that made me sick because I thought he was a great kid then, so I says, "Go on; you're drunk!" and beat it in my own room and locked the door, and he stood ravin' outside there till ten o'clock and I didn't get no dinner. He didn't get no dinner, either, believe *me*, because what I don't do for him doesn't get done, *you* know. Wouldn't you think he could treat me human when I work all day and do his housework nights? Not him, the old slob!

Well, Morris. How I come to meet him was y'know I'm in the credit department of Schatz and Lublein's. Somepin else the Old Man got sore about; didn't want me to work in no Jewish place—see?—but say, they was lined up ten deep in the employment office. So I'm Mr. Weiss's stenographer in the credit

department—see?—and one day in comes this young fella, and you shoulda heard how I fell for him. Crash!

He had kinda blue eyes and wavy black hair, like. And when he looks at you with his eyes half-shut—*you* know—*Baby!* Say, I was so rattled I couldn't understand what he wanted. He had a Ladies' Wear shop in the Bronx, but it wasn't doin' so good. So he'd ordered a bill of goods from the house and it was charged to him March first—see?—but he wanted Weiss to fix it up "as of" the first of May, so he wouldn't forfeit his discount—see? So he hands Weiss a line how he's goin' to have an Easter sale and he can pay it then easy, and how the district's buildin' up and business gettin' better all the time. So he hands Weiss this line, and say, I'll say this for him if I am off him for life, he can get anything he wants if he's got enough time to talk in. So Weiss falls for it, and then he gets kiddin' around and says, "Some little assistant you got here, Mr. Weiss."

And Weiss says,

"Sure, I got it a pretty good little vorker"—*you* know, all the English he can talk is dollars and cents—"Mr. Lipschitz meet Miss Sheehan."

So when I went out there he is in his little sporty car. I had a kinda feelin' he'd be there. You know how you kinda *know*, when somepin's goin' to happen? All upset-feelin'? Well, I had it and I couldn't eat no dinner. And the next night he came for me, too, and the one after that.

So then it was Saturday and we went to Far Rockaway together. And then I'd meet him somewhere's every night, and we started neckin' a little. But say! That boy don't know what a little means! They're awful—you know—and he had me kinda scared, but I was crazy about him. So that was when my father heard about it, and he keeps sayin',

"So I'm to have a daughter Mrs. Lipschitz, hay?"

I hadda laugh. Morris woulda married a girl named Sheehan just about as quick as I'd marry a Chinaman. *Marryin'* wasn't what he was after!

So I got kinda so I hated to go to confession—see?—and the last coupla times I got Father Gerraghty, too, and he's terrible strict, and he had me wore out sayin' Hail Marys. But I could kinda hold Morris off pretty good, but he had me goin' and he knew it. And so it got worse and worse, and he had me crazy for him. So it got to be pretty near Easter—see?—and Father Gerraghty wasn't goin' to let me take communion unless I laid off Morris, and my Old Man was after me every minute I was in the house, and Morris had me pretty near sick. . . .

Say, did you ever feel like your head would burst if people didn't leave you be? That's the way I was, so I cried and cried, and used to go out and walk the streets when Morris didn't call me up some days, and I couldn't eat and I'd cry all night—Was you ever that way? And I'd think how Morris looked at me, and how it felt when he kissed me—. He was kinda sweet to me, too; you know, sometimes he'd just pet me like he was my mother. And I knew he was a Jew, but gee, to hear my Old Man talk you'd think he wasn't human, or somepin.

So one night my father got good and drunk—see?—and he come home all ready to rip hell out of me. And he yelled so all the neighbors had their heads in the dumb waiters and

out the windows, and believe me there wasn't anybody for three blocks around that couldn'ta heard that I was going to the bad with a Jew. And he says "from this time forth I was no daughter of his"—you know how they talk when they're drunk—and that I was neither a good daughter or a good Catholic. Oh, say, he was awful! I nearly died. And then he called me somepin. I won't tell you what he called me; I wouldn't have it on my lips! You know! He called me *that*! And I'd been fightin' and fightin' not to give in to Morris, and he went and yelled *that* and everybody could hear. So then I went in my room and seemed like I didn't care if I lived or if I died.

II

So I was crazy for him—see?—and my Old Man and everybody thought I wasn't good any more, so I didn't care *what* I did. And I guess Morris saw it. So he asked me would I go away for the week-end with him—you know—and I said I would. So he says pack my bag and take it to his place—see?—and we'd go Friday night. Well, that was Good Friday. I felt terrible, but Good Friday don't mean anything to a Jew. And I thought how Father Gerraghty wouldn't let me take holy communion anyways, and how my father called me what he did, so I packed my bag and I didn't even put in my rosary. What'd I do with a rosary on a trip like that? But just at the last I seen the big crucifix Sister Veronica and the others give me when I left the Sisters' school, and somepin come over me and I put it on top my bag. Gee! On top a silk nightgown Morris give me out of his Ladies' Wear shop! But I always liked that crucifix because the face was kind of sweet and peaceful—you know—not a suffering Christ, but like He knew what it was all for and was glad to die. So I put it on top and shut the bag, and then I took it over to Mor-

ris's shop, and he wasn't there, so I just put it in behind a counter and got down to work, because it was late.

And I didn't see how Morris could afford to do it—see?—and so I'd asked him how he could do it because he was kinda broke. But he says, "Don't you worry. I'll have plenty. Don't *you* worry."

You know how it goes in a credit office? "So-and-so's had a fire." "Mr. Whoozis will pay ten cents." Ten cents on the dollar, that means; and there's about five fires get reported a day, regular. Some fella finds his stock isn't movin' and the only way to get returns is to collect his insurance—see? Ain't that a dirty trick? But they do it regular.

So that went on all morning. Well, I was so nervous I jumped a foot every time the phone rang. So pretty soon Mr. Weiss seen how it was with me and he began takin' the phone calls. So after the first rush was over he give me about twenty letters, and I sat down and began transcribin' them. And then the phone rings, and I hear Weiss say "Who? Mr. Lipschitz?" And I said "Yeh?" thinkin' it was for me, but he never give up the receiver, and pretty soon I come to and went back to work, because there's plenty other Lipschitzes in New York City. And then Mr. Weiss hung up the telephone—he didn't know nothing, *you* know—and looked at me funny and says "Remember that Lipschitz fella that wanted his bill made as of the first of May? He's got a fire in his Ladies' Wear shop in the Bronx."

Well, say, I guess he nearly died. I didn't wait to hear a word. I was outa there so quick you couldn't see me leavin'! At first I couldn't think anything at all. And then the first thing I seen when I come outa the subway was a big Church, all draped in black for Good Friday. And then I knew what was the matter with me—I was goin' after my crucifix. And

right there on the street I began cryin'—runnin' along like I was I cried all the time! And I thought "He did it on purpose! He did it to get money to take me!" because he could borrow on the expectation of his insurance—see?—they all do that. And I cried and cried. I don't know what was the matter with me, I was always cryin' those days.

Well, they'd put the fire out—see?—and there was a lot of spoiled stock layin' on the ground outside, but there was a policeman there and he wouldn't leave me go in.

"Nobody allowed in," he says, and then he says to a man he was talkin' to, "The dirty Jew, the store was full of soaked rags. We got the goods on him!"

So it was just like I'd never known anybody named Morris Lipschitz in my life; just like I was dreamin'—*you* know—and they wasn't talkin' about anybody I knew. So I went up to the policeman and I says "I got a leather bag in there I left. Couldn't I please get it?" And the policeman pointed at somepin on the ground without even stoppin' his talk. And I looked at it and it was the bag, all right, all burnt on the outside, blacklike and flakey.

So I knelt down and opened it, and it was still hot but I got it open, and there was the crucifix on top my scorched clothes.

And do you know what? The heat maybe melted it a little, but it was a funny way for it to do. Look! The head was dropped forward like this—see?—and there was a coupla drops on His cheeks and on His body! Oh, I felt like I'd put him on the cross again on Good Friday by actin' like I had! And all of a sudden I was talkin' just like the policeman, just like the Old Man. "Oh, the dirty Jew!" I says. "Oh, the dirty Jew!" And I never seen Morris again after that.

You know what I been thinkin'? Some call a Sister "A little bride of Christ—"

Three Business Men

By Arthur T. Munyan

I

HIS eyes are black and his whole mien commands. He is six feet tall and he looks immovable as he stands behind his glass-top desk staring one out of countenance. He has a trick of tugging at his belt as he stands there biting off his words, and the gesture is so replete with animal strength that it chills the blood. He is pure authority, unadulterated with intelligence or insight or vision. There is only one method he knows of handling a situation. At the outset he makes a head-long accusation, some monstrous absurdity, and listens dourly to denials and defense. In the end he says, "Well—all right—but somehow I got the *impression*—" Imbeciles admire him; fools hate him; civilized men agree with everything he says, and do as they please.

II

HE speaks with the voice of a violoncello. The exquisite cadences are un-

marred by any dissonance of common sense. With ideas, he is as prolific as an aphid; and each idea is priceless. Hell hath no fury such as that he turns upon the luckless oaf who looks askance at his dreams. He is surrounded by professional mental acrobats, each one a living wonder of bonelessness. To those who love him and keep his commandments he is a purring lion. When an idea flashes in the pan he fires a draftsman. Acrobats grow prematurely old.

III

HE is the man who patented the idea of putting the Golden Rule into Business. When he addresses a meeting strong men break down and weep like children; dead poets turn in their graves. To him, salesmanship is Science, speech is Art. He believes that all men are equal, and helps to prove that at least fifty per cent. of them are. As long as there are capital letters in the world, he will be an inspiration to us.



ALL women love brutal men—if their husbands are kind.



NCESSITY is the mother of circumvention.



In the Making

By Morris Gilbert

I

GOGO was extremely bored. He had been three days in Switzerland, and he hadn't seen a single Alp. It had been overcast all the time. Coming up over the Simplon it had been so cloudy that Gogo couldn't even see the bottoms of the valleys, let alone the mountain tops which his mother had urged him to be sure not to miss.

Gogo had stood in the passageway of his car and dutifully looked out the big window. He was less fatigued there than sitting in the compartment on the very inside away from the windows, trying to peer over the baggage of the large German lady and the English officer. The baggage occupied all the space in the seats next the windows, and a gun muzzle in a leather case that belonged to the Englishman poked Gogo in the back whenever he sat in his own seat. It had been a disgusting trip—the douaniers were especially exasperating, both on the Italian and the Swiss side, and the milk chocolate he bought, remembering his mother's enthusiasm, had made him thirsty. There was no water in the arrangement for water on the train.

Gogo had descended at Ouchy. That was the place his mother had bought his ticket for, in Venice three days earlier.

Ouchy was disappointing—it was like Fort Ticonderoga in a foreign dialect.

Gogo sat on the parapet in front of the big hotel that looked like the

grandstand of a race-course done in aqua-tints, and watched the little triangular sails of the pretty boats skimming over the lake. The water was rough, and the air was a little chilly. Gogo had lost the guide-book his mother had given him, and he couldn't remember the parts that applied to Ouchy in the book by Henry James she had made him read as preparation. Gogo wasn't brave enough to set about hiring a sail-boat, if it were possible to hire one; and he shrank from making a spectacle of himself trying to get back to the dock in nautical style. He never could remember whether you luffed or veered or tacked or went into the wind or out of it when making a landing. He knew he would feel foolish, and look foolish too, if he tried it.

That was the trouble with Gogo. He was always feeling foolish. And the grimmer he set his unlined face and the sterner he looked out of his blue eyes at a sardonic world, the more foolish he felt. Age, that was it! Being twenty, and not thirty-five, or fifty.

"Gogo, how perfectly absurd. I'm ashamed of you," his mother had said vigorously, when he complained to her about his callow appearance. "You're wonderfully manly—tall, and good-looking. Everybody thinks you've grown splendidly in the last two years. And you know you have plenty of Determination. You drilled those Scouts of yours perfectly. I was so proud of you."

But that didn't help. . . . Gogo had just seen an Italian with a monocle

kiss a woman's hand. And he had actually felt himself blushing. As red as the banner of St. Mark—this had been in Venice.

"What a *guigne* trip it is," sighed Mrs. Humphry as she walked down the arches of the Square to have pastry and sugar-water at one of the little tables. Gogo was always infinitely embarrassed when his mother marched manfully along through the streets with a cigarette in her hand. A cigarette and four diamond rings—that was too much.

"There's more malaria in Venice every year," she continued, depositing her little cigarette case, and her enormous purse, and her sunshade, and two tooled leather card-cases and a lot of dried sea-horses wrapped in paper, just purchased, on the table with a plump. "The canals smell more abominably than ever, and they never wash the house fronts just at the water-line, at all—they're absolutely green with slime. I've complained about it to the manager of the hotel. The food is execrable—the chef, whoever he is, has forgotten all he ever knew about making *frito misto* . . . I can't imagine why I come back, year after year—it's really impossible. There, Gogo, do take that little chocolate one. I know it won't make you sick. And I'll have a green one if there are any."

Mrs. Humphry turned to the waiter.

"*Dove,*" she said, "*Do-ve il verde gateaux?* Can't you understand? The green ones—the ones the used to have here."

The waiter diminished.

"Brutal!" said Mrs. Humphry. "Simply brutal! That's the only way to describe the stupidity of these people. Oh, what a *guigne* trip this has been! There, Gogo, you're covered with chocolate. No, you mustn't use your handkerchief. Your napkin, Gogo!" . . .

And here was Gogo, in Ouchy, sent on ahead by his mother to meet his Aunt Kate. And Aunt Kate had sent

a telegram saying she was delayed. Well, at least it was a relief to be away from his mother when she shouted in French, English and four words of Italian at the gondoliers and tradesmen. Gogo was sure they were all doing their best, but Gogo's mother knew better. It was a conspiracy combined with hard luck—just *guigne*, that was all. "Now Gogo, don't fidget. I know how to deal with these people." And she shouted at the little cameo dealer, "*Troppo! Troppo!*"

II

"Gó-gó!"

The syllables were separated, and there was an unmistakable accent over each O.

Gogo turned halfway round precipitately, twisting his body as he sat on the parapet. He perceived a lady standing close to him and a little at his back. She was dressed in an afternoon-gown whose skirt was black. When Gogo thought about the gown afterward, he recalled that there was red in the waist, and the sleeves were long. The neck was cut rather low in a rounded oval. Gogo, thinking about it later, in a swoon of memory, evoked the suggestion of a line separating, evidently, the lady's breasts. But it was really a demure gown, and the lady, Gogo might have decided, was a demure lady.

When his name was called, Gogo was too bewildered by a glimpse of an oval blonde face, of the most delicate contour, to assemble his critical faculties. It was a face to wonder at. The firmness of line, the deftness and precision with which the features were joined, moulded it into a unique and touching beauty.

On the face was a smile. It was in the eyes, which were brown, and on the lips, and played in lights and shadows—not even dimples—on the cheeks.

Almost immediately Gogo remembered himself—his fatal wooden self.

He saw that he had turned too quickly, too nervously, that his body was strained in an awkward position, that his face wore a look of stupendous gravity and—yes—sheepish alarm. He simply looked very frightened; and he felt as if he were turned to stone.

"Gó-gó," said the lady, and the O's made themselves little umlauts of their own accord. "It's a naice name. I heard your mother call it you in Venizia."

The smile was as bright as ever. By this time Gogo had got himself off the parapet and his hat off his head. The lady stopped speaking. Evidently it was Gogo's turn. He attempted a bow, and cleared his throat.

"It was very good of you," said Gogo, and bowed three times in succession while he was saying it. He bowed more because his vitals seemed to be wilting than for any other reason. He just couldn't help bowing.

The lady didn't seem to realize, as Gogo immediately did, that his remark was the most absurd remark ever made. She simply said,

"Yes."

There was a pause. Then Gogo cleared his throat again.

"My name is Humphry," he volunteered. "That's my last name."

"Oh, but I like Gó-gó better," the lady said, but not before Gogo's mind, without at all waiting to clear its throat, spoke to him. You damn fool, it said, what *are* you talking about? What an utterly stupid point to make. Confusion waxed in Gogo.

Presently he found himself walking beside the lady down the walk toward the boat houses and the town. She was speaking.

"It is such a forlorn place to be alone in, this Ouchy." There was a shrug in that word. "You and I—both of us alone—and you looked so naice sitting on that wall."

The smile came out again.

"My mother was an American,"

the lady continued. "I love America, but I cannot live there. The people are so upright they make me feel like a tight-rope walker."

Gogo's comments had best go unrecorded. He hates to consider them himself.

"My husband is in England now," she said, and she smiled at Gogo.

Soon they were sitting on the terrace of the aqua-tinted hotel. A waiter, very condescending to Gogo at his solitary lunch, was full of celerity now.

Gogo rallied, even while the waiter was poised above him with his pad and pencil in hand like a diver taking-off.

"Let's have some ice-cream," said Gogo. "Or perhaps you'd rather have tea and cakes—or tea and cinnamon-toast." This last suggestion was made with less enthusiasm.

She paused a moment, thinking deeply.

"The wheesky here isn't really bad," she said judiciously. "Let's have wheesky-soda."

The waiter dove . . .

"Now, dear Gogo," said the lady some time later, "thank you so much. I'm glad we didn't go sailing—it's much nicer here."

Gogo, with a spinning head and much courage, had suggested a sail. He could find, he argued to himself, many ways out if she accepted. But she didn't. Score a point for Gogo.

"And I'm glad I was brave enough to speak to you," she said.

"Until dinner then, Gó-gó," said the lady.

She seemed to take pleasure in speaking his name. And she looked at him approvingly too.

But Gogo was as solemn as the Sphinx. To bring forth a smile was as impossible as to pull down an aqua-tinted veranda pillar. The lady put out her hand, holding it almost straight from the shoulder. Gogo reached up and shook it hard. He put his soul into that hand-shake.

She smiled.

"What a naice boy you are," she cried, and ran in a spray of laughter down the steps.

III

A FEW moments later he was pacing, a baffled panther, up and down his airy room where the dusk was tinting the white curtains and the air was blowing in, cool, from the lake.

"She wanted me to kiss her hand," moaned Gogo. "She didn't even want me to, she *expected* me to! Oh idiot! dolt! stupid! Oh—will I ever grow up—will I ever know—learn? . . ."

They had dinner together. The lady smiled, and Gogo brightened at his second glass of wine. The waiter dove perpetually while the captain stood over him like a judge with a stop-watch in his hand. Gogo's dinner jacket looked very "naice."

("One never can tell," Mrs. Humphry had said. "We may go to the Embassy for an evening party—pack them, Gogo. I believe if you have a thing you should use it. No, not the tails. The dinner jacket will do very well at your age—I'm sure everybody will understand.")

The lady's gown—a thing of gossamer and silver. She smiled in it; she smiled at Gogo, smiled at the waiter, smiled at the champagne, smiled at the night.

"Do you really like me," Gogo asked, incredulous.

His face was flushed, and his hair was much nicer when it was a little mussed—though he'd have had his comb out had he known it. He leaned across the table and there was a wonder in his eyes that made the lady stop smiling. She looked at him and her mouth became grave and petulant, like a baby's.

"Yes, very much," she said.

"I love you," he responded, with a face like a mask of Momus.

IV

Gogo stumbled across the threshold. He sensed the room, a cham-

ber of light gray and silver. A standing lamp . . . a chaise longue . . . pillows . . . a door at one side, open . . . through it a glimpse of a chaste white bed . . . glass doors that gave on a balcony.

"Gogo, sit on these pillows," said her voice from the chaise longue. It was three hours after dinner. They had walked by the lake, Gogo's head whirling and his spirit leaping beside this creature who paced with him. On his arm was her hand on which pale stones were lucent under the occasional lamps. At a gate beside the lake they turned in. For a few moments they sat on a veranda there. Then the lady said, "Wait twenty minutes, and then come in. Go up the stairs and call to me."

Gogo obediently squatted on the pillows beside the chaise longue. His posture was meant to denote ease, but it failed to achieve the actuality. Whenever he looked up, it strained his neck. And his arm went to sleep. It was supporting his body because he didn't dare to lean back. If he had he would have touched her.

One of her fingers strayed in his hair. He had an impulse to reach for his comb. He restrained it. Instead, he pulled nervously at his collar. A cool hand closed over his. It did not let go. So his other arm began to go to sleep too. But he would not move.

Gogo didn't dare look at her, because as he came in he noticed that she had changed her gown again. The gossamer of the dinner gown was broadcloth to this. Little slippers without heels drooped negligently from her feet. He could glimpse them out of the corner of his eyes if he looked.

The hand that had been holding his own, moved. It circled his cheek, and applied a pressure there. Gogo became aware that it was an unspoken command for him to turn round. He did so—oh, the relief of moving his arms, stretching his legs, turning! He looked up question-

ingly. At that moment her lips rested like petals on his. Her arms went about his body. They drew him close to her. Her lips moved. "Darling Gogo," they said, but they did not go away . . . even then they smiled. . . .

It was very awkward, but he had to move. He was way off balance, resting on one knee and one outstretched leg on the floor, with his body projected sideways at an angle of forty-five degrees. If he didn't move, he realized, he would fall. So he got up (his joints cracked) and went and sat in a chair.

For a time they looked at one another. She was very composed. He assumed a casual air. But what a lie it was!

His senses, his mind, his nerves were in a vortex. He felt like blubbing, like gibbering, like rolling on the ground. The frightful agony of unexpressiveness was rowelling him. The awful fact of being twenty—twenty—and of not knowing what to do, what to think, what to say, how to control any situation, weighed him under—under. . . . The lady reclined beside the lamp, smiling, quiet, serene. She was looking at him.

"Gogo," she said.

Gogo tumbled out of the chair. Half crouching, running, prone, in a desperate needs of getting through space to her, and of burying his head in the only place where she couldn't see his tears, in her breast, he reached the couch. Gogo knelt beside it. . . . and sobbed . . . and sobbed. . . .

V

"TELL me, Gogo," whispered the lady somewhat later, "how old are you?"

"Twenty-four," said Gogo, manfully. "How old are you?"

"Twenty," she said.

VI

"It's typical of Kate to miss the train at Lyons," Mrs. Humphry was saying. "Just like the time she packed my blue serge instead of my Chinese crepe when I was going to Egypt on that damned tour. It's identical."

They were driving, Mrs. Humphry and Gogo, from the station toward the aqua-tinted hostelry. Passing the night in a *wagon-lit* had not improved Mrs. Humphry's temper. . . .

"And Gogo, you have no Idea what I've been through! The hotel strike in Milan! People sleeping with their shoes off in their stocking feet in all the hotel lobbies. Obscene, I call it, just Obscene. And not a bed or mattress to be had for love or money in the whole city—I hate Milan anyway, it's a *guigne* city. With its gingerbread cathedral and that dirty old thing on the wall by Da Vinci—there's an extra hand in that picture, I never could understand it. And after I'd been driven from pillar to post and back for three hours in a jolting, filthy little fiacre, the coachman had the effrontery to turn round and tell me he knew where there was a room in a pension, he *thought*. He Thought! The old rascal knew it all the time—but he wouldn't tell me until he'd squeeze three hours' worth of driving out of me and made me pay him. . . . I took it of course—a little room in a most objectionable neighborhood—and, Gogo, I really can't describe the place he brought me to! It was just a brothel—a Brothel—do you understand me, Gogo?"

"Yes, mother," Gogo answered.

But his eyes were very bewildered.



In the Department of Love

By Charles G. Shaw

I

THE lover, most assuredly, lives upon flattery, cajolery, compliment. And surely there is no tickling of one's vanity equal to that which is experienced when the woman one loves deliberately fails to keep an appointment with a rival suitor.

II

The clever woman fully realizes that she must appear to be the one that is sought, the one that is pursued, and will, accordingly, fail to take the initiative. The woman who attempts to manage matters herself almost invariably loses the man, be he a fellow of the slightest worth. A man desires to reveal his ability, his ingenuity, his power, etc. Hence, the shrewd woman refuses to impede his arrangements with theories of her own but, appreciatingly and charmingly, accedes to his various efforts to fascinate her.

III

When a man makes love to a woman he invariably resorts to certain devices, deceptions, fabrications. Thus, when he fails to do so, the woman may well assume that he is not in love with her.

IV

In an affair of the heart two factors are essential: the lover and the one who is loved. The minute they change places, the affair comes to an end.

V

Every woman I have ever known has recalled some form of flora. Some have suggested clinging vines, wild ferns, creepers. . . . Others have resembled faded violets, blushing roses, pallid pansies. . . . I once knew a woman who reminded me of nothing so much as a cactus.

VI

A lovers' quarrel results from two things: too much pride in the woman and too little of it in the man.

VII

A sentimental man thinks in terms of the thing he loves. A sentimental woman thinks in terms of herself.

VIII

It is quite possible for a woman to fall in love with almost any man if she be constantly in his company. That is providing, of course, that the man does not make love to her.

IX

As soon as the touch of compulsion enters into an affair of love it is clear that the bubble of amour has exploded.

X

Surely the woman who laughs at the man who makes love to her is a fool. Though certainly not so great a fool as the man who continues to make love to her.



Club Night

By Carlos C. Drake

I

JOHN FREMLIP stepped from the shadows of the library into the full light of the music-room. In that moment he appeared very old; those deep wrinkles on that tired white face distinctly visible, the cheeks sunken, the gray eyes with heavy lines beneath, and hair that glistened faintly white back from his forehead. The slight stoop of his shoulders made his coat ill-fitting; his clothing hung upon him loosely, yet, with a vague sense of that Victorian attitude which had always distinguished him, he bore himself erect as if his body, slender like that of youth, retained its former vigor. But there were blue veins upon his hands. Age, though molding with regard for dignity, neglects to reserve minute physical appearances which have been most fair. Age softens consciousness, the pangs of memory, but not the visual aspect of material things. John Fremlip stood in the doorway as an ancient patriarch might have stood upon emerging from the blackness of a forgotten tomb into the sudden glare of day.

There was no one in the room, yet he waited for a moment, looking about him. It was difficult for him to distinguish clearly since his eyes had weakened. He saw, because of myopia, a distant blur. The shadows on the wall near him lengthened into better proportion than the chairs within the room, than the piano in the corner, than the door directly opposite. He was accustomed to this. His glasses aided when they did not tire his eyes, but because of that irritation he disliked wearing them.

He knew this house as one knows

one's fingers. For he had himself designed it. It was done in an antiquated style and stood in a part of town which forty or more years back had been the most fashionable. His daughter he had brought here when she was very young, and now with her husband and her children she had taken possession of it. The house had grown old along with him. The quiet intimacy of its surroundings which the years had not appreciably altered satisfied him and kept alive a certain association with his past. They were a reminder of a time when he was not dependent upon anybody. He had long been retired from business. And that child of his with her husband whom he had never liked but whom he tolerated, as, no doubt, the fellow tolerated him, were actually his means of support.

Humanly querulous at times, as the aged are, he could not resign himself to the inertia which this fact seemed to demand. How else should an old man spend his days? He could lie back and watch things move about him. But at intervals he would catch himself musing, "A parasite, by George, that's what I am!" And then would come the thought, "All old people and children are, in a sense,—parasites."

He moved out into the room.

But Fremlip was not subject to ennui. He enjoyed a few books that his granddaughter would read to him, various gallery exhibits, musicales, and the opera which had been of great comfort to him of late years. He would go alone, sitting far back where he could dream the thing out, or sleep the thing out if it bored him. Rossini, and Donizetti, and Mozart . . . he felt a pleasing famil-

ilarity with them, as if he, too, harbored a little of that common sympathy among lovers of beauty in music, beauty in any art, beauty in anything. This was the one bond of consolation which, even devoid of fine appreciative faculty, kept alive the charm in things.

But he discouraged his daughter from accompanying him. She spoiled that peculiar sentiment which he could derive from being by himself. Had she not whispered and chuckled sometimes during an especially charming air? Stupid lack of taste. She should know better, have more respect. He only forgave her when she would play the piano for him one or two evenings a week while he rested in his armchair, smoking his after-dinner cigar, and ruminating on his past. His past. What a very long time it had been! Eight-three years.

. . .

And yet . . . he walked considerably well even without a cane. An active man who in his time had done active things is not down and out at eighty-three. He had a pride about that. John Fremlip was more or less typical of a school which the present generation did not offer. Varied qualities he had which made him consciously separate. His pride and confidence satisfied a feeling that he was still immune from the shadows that dogged his footsteps, those little shadows of his growing weaknesses. There is a sombre streak in a character of that sort whether transcended or no by extra abilities; more clarity of mind, or complexity of mood. It might only be a profound sensitiveness. He had felt so many times. Men of mind and mood are not happy in their lives.

But on this particular evening John Fremlip was experiencing an exhilaration. He was to meet at his club several old friends, the fifth occasion of the kind, held once every ten years. Not a trivial rendezvous of men who enjoyed one another's company, not a fraternity custom, but something infinitely deeper in the minds of these few men who, because they had in their lives undergone almost similar conditions, understood

each other with sympathy and affection.

There were six at the beginning. At the last meeting, ten years ago, only three had been present, of which John Fremlip was one. The reports of the deaths of those others had not been definite. Gorge, one of them, had died in Java during the great plague. Karrabee had passed away one morning at his London residence. And the other, old Nelson Carter, had just disappeared. No one ever knew what became of him. There had been no letter, no news account, no trace that could be found through relatives.

So there were but three left—Rendersford, Phil Rallie, and himself—old men who had once been young together.

Standing there in that lighted music-room with its dainty Jacobean furniture he felt a slow surge of satisfaction. It was, after all, something momentous. In the torpid routine of his practical existence the expectation of this evening was as a breath of fresh air. It had color. The aspect of inanimate objects about him bore a different value. They were no longer reminders of a dying past. They had a subtle relation to the living present. The years against them were negligible. Something seemed to drop away from him. He straightened up.

On the mantel the little carved clock was striking the hour.

Eight o'clock!

Another sixty minutes and he would be ready to leave for his club where his friends would meet him. For several years he hadn't gone out at all after dark unless it was to hear something at The Metropolitan. The air was bad for him. But now he moved toward the door eagerly.

"I'm a bit impatient," he thought. "There's the whole evening ahead. I told Brinton not to bring the car around till nine. What a time I shall have. . . ."

Turning slowly he crossed back and entered the parlor.

II

It was a warm night outside and the room he entered had several windows

open. A breeze pushed the curtains in against the sashes which held them, the one nearest the door moving a trifle. He felt a draft against his cheek, and closed the door behind him rather sharply. There was a slight movement on the other side of the center table where one cadescent spot from the red reading lamp fell upon the figure of a man seated in the heavy armchair. As Fremlip came forward he rose and extended his hand.

"I am Jack Kenneth," he said, "and I'm taking Carolyn to the Lardners' dinner tonight. I met you, I believe, the last time I was here."

Fremlip accepted his cordial grasp with a smile. So this was the young chap that had been trotting his grandchild around!

She had spoken of him, he remembered. The face seemed familiar. But he answered as if in a daze,

"Yes, yes . . . quite right! I've heard Carolyn mention your name."

Then collecting himself he said,

"She is very popular with you young men! I have a hard time keeping account of her swains."

And Fremlip smiled.

"It's all very well if one is favored, sir."

"You don't seem discouraged."

"I'm not, sir. Will you smoke?"

He was leaning forward into the lamp-light, the full glare of it upon his face. It was one of those healthy, robust-looking faces that Fremlip rather envied, with clear brown eyes, and a supercilious twist to the mouth. The old man felt a faint aversion for that mouth and those keen eyes that bespoke a trifle too much confidence. And he was being offered a cigar.

"Not exactly your brand, I guess; the best I can afford."

Fremlip heard the words dimly. At that age he wouldn't have dared offer a cigar to any one, wouldn't have been seen with one among people older than himself—something almost immodest about it. He replied, "Thank you, no. I've had mine."

The young man shrugged his

shoulders, seating himself upon the edge of the chair. The light glistened on the lapel of his dinner-jacket and struck one spot on a shining patent-leather shoe. He sat, regarding Fremlip who had settled back in an armchair, his white head against the dark pillows.

"Did you take in all the dances, sir, when you were young?"

Fremlip frowned. Conventional reminder . . . when he was young! Why did everyone have to ask that as if there was nothing left, as if he wanted nothing and couldn't get it if he did?

"No," he said briefly. "I didn't go to many dances. When I would get through working during the day I'd be too tired."

The explanation sounded prosaic. Doubtless the boy had heard it before. How different he had been! How different his friends had been, Rendersford, or Rallie, or any of 'em!

"But you must have had some relaxation, sir. Work isn't everything."

"When I was your age," Fremlip stated with gentle emphasis, "work had to be everything. I didn't enjoy your advantages."

He felt like adding, "Nor do I regret the fact." But he refrained. He couldn't expect an understanding. Philosophy on the matter would be regarded as natural since he was old. And the boy could be insolent enough if he chose.

"You are a college man?"

"No."

"I heard Mrs. Wright tell someone in the hall as I came in that you were going to a club meeting tonight, and I thought perhaps. . . ."

Fremlip winced. He had not wished the household to meddle in his affairs. His daughter always meddled. It hurt his pride. That anyone could feel the significance of this one occasion, the sort of significance it held for him who had so long anticipated its coming, seemed improbable. He knew that his daughter considered him a rank sentimentalist.

"It's going to be hard," he told himself, "to break away, but after that it's going to be an inspiration."

But to be questioned unexpectedly by this youth was aggravating.

Turning to the boy he said quickly.

"No, a personal matter, a meeting with some old friends of mine. I haven't seen them for ten years."

"Ten years! It should be interesting."

"It will be!" Fremlip was slightly taken aback at the chill in his own voice.

"I've often wondered, sir," the boy commenced with unusual confidence, "what it would be like to do that sort of thing. Like a college reunion, I suppose?"

"No," said Fremlip dryly, "it isn't."

"Why not?"

"Because the conditions are not the same. College men, the majority of them, are dependent upon their families for tuition fees. It is the usual custom, I believe, and it changes the aspect of their acquaintances immediately. You believe in the theory of the value of college association. I do not dispute it. But you must remember that such an association is not as truly a forming of steadfast friendships as in my case and the case of my friends. We were obliged, you see, to support ourselves. We began doing it at an extremely early age, as birds learn to fly when they are young. At intervals the world slapped our faces. This was good experience and it taught us things. It also gave us an insight into what the qualifications for friendship are. You might call it 'mutual sympathy.' We were able to estimate each other. And coming back after the years to view what things we might have accomplished, we are not in doubt about how any one of us faced his own peculiar problems or how great a trust we may place in him. It all amounts to this, that the college man often wonders why certain of his classmates have made failures of themselves or why others have made successes. He doesn't stop to consider that in a practical sense he doesn't know his own friends. It's the plunging through actuality that counts." Fremlip stopped out of breath. The young man and the old sat staring at each other.

Why, he had been talking as though he still belonged to that active world which he had known. What had he to do with independent activity now? An old crow who had difficulty in summing figures or even seeing them. His daughter had to keep all his accounts. And this young chap in front of him, who no doubt thought him a codger, and would think those cronies of his codgers, what had he to do with such matters? And looking up he thought, "Fortunate beggar. . . . I wish I had his youth."

But young fellows like this one strangely terrified him. They seemed so abnormally reserved, or if they were not reserved they slipped into a state of reckless dissolution, urged forward by a colossal impudence of one sort or another. He had honestly tried to find in them some feeling congenial to his own, some comprehension of his desire for friendship, some warmth of tenderness. It was difficult for him to force himself to a level of their point of view. And as a result he drew himself apart from them, often with a faint bitterness. So seldom do the young and the aged reach a status of equal footing with an approach impeded as it is by a perfectly useless cynicism.

"You don't believe in college, then?" the boy asked.

"I do, assuredly," Fremlip answered with conviction. "I would have gone, I know, had I been given the chance."

He noticed a pin upon the boy's vest, very small with minute jewels. Fraternity. What was there in it stronger than his interpretation of the right to fidelity, his definition of a spirit caught in one's youth? There seemed a foreignness about it as if it were empty of something which existed within the solemn boundaries of his own singular relation. Without imaginative faculty this boy had missed the amazing intenseness of a sheer sentimental glamor that loneliness can conjure out of life. He thought suddenly, "He doesn't understand—not a word I've said; I can hardly blame him."

"I'm getting out this year," the boy

explained with a satisfied air. "It has seemed a long time. I suppose when I've grown a bit I'll look back and think it was all devilish short. There's the butler wishing to speak to you, sir."

Fremlip twisted about in his chair and looked toward the door.

"Brinton here?" he asked. "Tell him I'll be right down."

The man bowed, still holding the door. "Mrs. Wright would like to see you, sir, before you go." And as Fremlip rose, he added, "Shall you wear your overcoat, sir?"

"Yes, I may need it. I'm not as warm-blooded as I used to be." He smiled a little, nodding to the boy who shook his hand.

"Glad to have seen you, sir."

"Ah, yes . . . thanks. Wish you fortune with that youngster of mine! She's more than I could handle." And hearing a sound behind him, Fremlip said, "Here she is now."

He turned toward the girl who had entered rather quickly, a little breathless, her cheeks flushed above the blue satin of her low-cut dress. She stood for a moment with a concerned expression about those dark eyes with their long lashes.

"I'm sorry to be late. We can just make it. I didn't know gran'dad was here."

"We've been philosophizing like two old gentlemen, or rather like two young gentlemen," Fremlip said with a twinkle. He put his hand on her shoulder. "You look very sweet tonight."

The girl laughed, throwing her bobbed hair back. She reached up and kissed his cheek. He smelled a scent of chypre, very faint. Then she was gone through the doorway where the maid stood in the hall with her cloak.

Old Fremlip followed leisurely, put on his things, took his cane from the butler, and then turning, asked, "Where is your mistress?"

"In the library, sir."

"You say she wished to see me?"

"Yes, sir."

Hat in hand, Fremlip passed through the music-room, and into the library.

The glow from the several stand lamps cast a pale glitter along those rows of his books, stacked high in their dark wood shelves. His daughter was sitting with her back to him, reading. He approached her and spoke quietly. "I am going now."

Lowering her book, she murmured, "I just wanted to make sure that you wouldn't forget your wrap. It's not good for you, going out like this. You remember last winter when you caught that chill. . . ."

Fremlip stiffened slightly. Always nagging . . . this damnable conscientiousness. He should be free of it tonight. It wasn't fair, calling to the surface in him a quality of submission incapable of revolt because it invariably fatigued. He felt a strong desire to say, "Oh, don't pester me!"

She continued, "It won't do you any good to stay out until all hours. Goodness knows, Carolyn will be home late enough!"

Indignation flamed in his eyes. But with an effort he stifled his feelings and left the room. He could hear the chugging and sputtering of a taxi outside that was taking his grandchild to her affair. Or was it that young chap's car? He didn't care which. A longing to get to his club as soon as possible possessed him. It was as though the call of those old memories, which with this night had been enhanced by their nearness to reality, inoculated him with a swift intense bitterness. As he went out the door there reached his ears a sound of voices, a faint squeal of laughter, and then the diminishing putter of a motor down the street. The night air was fresh about him. Brinton, the chauffeur, stood waiting by the curb, holding the door of the car open.

III

SETTLING back in his seat he gave himself over to reflection. A vague curiousness came over him that with intricate emotions augmented his expectancy. But there was a touch of melancholy, too, as if he was subconsciously aware of change.

All would not be as he had left it, ten years previous; his friends themselves would, perhaps, be a trifle different as he was different without exactly knowing in what way. It had been eight years now since he had heard from either of them. Phil Rallie had returned to his home in San Francisco. He was engaged in shipping, and had hinted once or twice of taking up the Eastern branch which would probably carry him to China. And Rendersford had no permanent address. He was constantly traveling and so had never married. The queer little places of the world had at one time or another seen him, and he was filled with stories of them, humorous anecdotes, strange colored descriptions that were always new and always of interest to his listeners.

Fremliip wondered of what he would have to tell this time; he felt a keen wish to know, to feel the fascination of those distant wanderings, the virility of them against the drabness of his own conventional experiences. For there was an heroic grandeur, if only in the imagining, about Rendersford's achievements. That was the secret of his promethean endurance. He had been a man bereft of responsibility, devouring the spirit that dwells alone within the land and the sea and the open spaces.

Yes, Rendersford was a romanticist; that was what made him so lovable, perhaps. He knew so much of the human side of life, and understood. A strong man physically, he had been engaged in many pursuits; wrecker, trader, whaler, scholar, and a connoisseur of rarities from those hidden places he had known and loved so well. Fremliip could see him now, those strong fingers of his caressing that briar pipe which he always had with him, his legs crossed deep in an arm chair, and the movement of the grizzled moustache above those firm lips as he talked. . . .

The stress of emotion rose higher in old Fremliip's breast. He remembered thousands of things . . . the clothing they had worn, their inflection of voice, their gruff hearty laughter. And the

warmth of that meeting, ten years ago, the intense satisfaction of it! Ah! it would be good to see them again . . . to feel the pressure of their handclasp, to hear them talk and argue in the familiar way!

As the car drew up before the high stone door of his club Fremliip felt a vehement rush of emotion. The ten years quickly faded as if they had been hours. He went in hurriedly, wondering whether either of his friends had arrived ahead of him. Everything looked the same, obvious and natural, the somber furnishings, the high fluted ceiling with its crossbeam and the lights hanging from it upon their bronze chains. The familiar odor of the place assailed him; cigar smoke, and the scent of paper and old wood and men . . . he accepted it all with its rich and precious significance. Of the man at the desk he asked: "Has either Mr. Rallie or Mr. Rendersford arrived?"

He received a negative reply. It was still quite early. Would he go to the room which had been reserved for them?

A boy led him up to it, a spacious apartment on the second floor overlooking a drowsy side street. A large center lamp illumined the interior. Several easy chairs were drawn up before the table. The boy left him, closing the heavy wood door behind. He seated himself, sighing with a pleasant weariness. He would have to wait.

A form of twilight invaded that room with its deep shadows which expelled any extreme contrast, and the pallid flush of light, hardly moving in its soft position on the ceiling. A dominant stillness seemed to hang over everything, broken only by his breathing, and the ticking of a clock upon the mantel. Not many minutes now, he hoped, before they would arrive and his pleasure would reach completeness. What a great deal he would have to say to them. . . .

He almost jumped as there came a knock upon the door. His heart beating very fast, he managed to call, "Come in!" But a disappointment swept over him. It was only a waiter whom he

had asked the man at the desk to send up.

"They have saved the old sherry for you, sir. Shall I bring it now?"

Fremliip nodded. "You might as well," he said. "Careful when you open it."

The man left the door ajar, and rising to close it Fremliip thought, "Just enough for the three of us. Old stuff; best I could do."

The lights from the building across the street suddenly flashed, and across the space beneath he heard for a moment a murmur of voices. Fremliip went to the window and looked out. How strangely still it was! The arc lamps threw a ghostly flare across the pavement. He saw a policeman standing near one of them at the corner. A couple were passing on the other side, half-hidden by the shadows.

"The same as it ever was," he mused. "I can't see the changes in this light."

He returned to his chair and taking out a cigar lighted it with some matches that he found on the table. Then, settling back, he relaxed. The smoke curled upward toward the ceiling where the streaks of yellow from the lamp lay, curiously reflected. Blue smoke against that yellow glow . . . he closed his eyes. They should be arriving now at any moment. No doubt they had been delayed. He half dozed until the man returned with a tray and some small glasses, and the wine, wrapped in its napkin. It sparkled faintly as he poured it out. It was old like himself, fragrant. And he said, "That will do. I do not wish to be disturbed by any one except the gentlemen who are coming."

The man bowed silently and withdrew. Quiet hung in the room. For a long while Fremliip smoked without moving. The ash grew upon his cigar and suddenly crumbled off, unnoticed. A film of it caught upon his trouser-leg. On the mantel the clock ticked.

A time for forgetfulness of the present and sweet vivid memory of the past . . . they could do that for him. They could take him back to the things that he had left when his youth had left, to

the joy of the romance of his youth, the miraculous possibilities, the brilliant conceptions, to all that had appeared so intensely magnified because the natural surge of impulses had been there. It was an almost eloquent feeling that stirred him now, thick with hyperbole of fine recollections, the cherished glamour of things that would never die because for him and for them their illusion had been so complete. He let this feeling grow in him, let himself fall into a form of reverie, each flowering thought evoking a vague happiness.

Quietly the minutes went, tick, tick, tick. . . . The shadows seemed to lengthen in the room. How mellow was that light that wove among them, that dreamed among them, like tall tapestries in the corners, stirred by a breeze! He opened his eyes with a start. What had happened? Had he been asleep, sitting there? His cigar was burned out. A shaft of light gleamed on the glasses on the table, waiting under the lamp. He looked at the clock.

Past eleven?

Impossible! It must have stopped or gone wrong, or he was not seeing rightly. But there it went, tick, tick, tick. . . . The room seemed a trifle darker.

He went to the window in a dazed fashion. Nothing there . . . but the empty street, the lamps along the curb. But the lights in the building opposite had gone out. He hadn't noticed that.

Then, all at once, his thoughts stopped for a moment, gathered into one large thought that made him stand very still and rigid by the window. His heart had stopped, too, it seemed. Then he felt it pounding faster, felt it all through him and in his brain.

Could it be . . . could it be that they weren't coming?

Gathering his forces he began walking slowly up and down the room. But his instincts, overwhelmed by that tide of emotion, urged him to act impetuously, to hurl himself in frantic, wild revolt against the pressure of his realization. He couldn't believe . . . couldn't make himself believe. It affected him with a

feeling of nausea. He sat down on the window seat and allowed the air to play upon his face.

"My God," he thought, "it's preposterous. . . ."

He waited . . . waited. The minutes went on ticking in the room. Outside a cab rolled by with a rhythmic creaking of its rear spring. The rattle of an elevated sounded over the housetops, still against a world of faint stars.

Oh, why wouldn't they come? Why? Old faces . . . some one who knew him, had known him in those other days, some one who could grasp his hand and say, "I understand." To sit about this table and talk. Oh, God! Just one of them . . . some one to talk to!

The window curtain rustled gently. A whistle blew, echoed in the night air, died. A surface car jangled its bell. Then came a weighted silence in which the clock commenced striking. It struck . . . one, two, three, and on; and with each measured stroke something died within old Fremlip's breast.

And as if answering that invincible conviction which moved within him there came the servant to the door, slowly opening it.

"I thought, perhaps, sir, as your friends didn't come, you'd like me to call your car."

Fremlip moved away from the window. "Yes," he said quietly, "thank you. . . ."



Payment

By Leonard Hall

PAY me in love's currency—
Pay me not at all! —
Yet my ears shall burn to hear
Your light footfall!

Laugh, and turn to others—
Dance down other ways! —
Still I hold in strengthless hands
All our yesterdays!



A MAN lies to a woman on two occasions: when he wishes to escape from her and when he loves her. But never when he hates her.



DOLLAR—the trade name for thirty-eight cents.



Six Cold Bottles of Pilsener

By Ford Douglas

(Author of the Judge Hawper Saga)

I

OLD TOM BOWDITCH, the bailiff, had hoisted danger signals long before court opened that morning, for the state of Judge Hawper's liver, together with the weather, made the navigation of legal waters ticklish business indeed. The day was hot and the flies bit Judge Hawper's bald head with devilish persistence. No less than three lawyers had remarked on the humidity to His Honor, and on each occasion had been rewarded with a blast of judicial grape. He commented that the local bar was becoming famed for the originality of its observations and that lawyers nowadays had both the time and the enterprise to delve into matters entirely without the law and into things that did not concern them or him in the least.

The cause that contributed most, perhaps, to Judge Hawper's bad humor was the fact that on trial that day was a case which he had hinted rather broadly to the district attorney should be dismissed, or at least continued. The defendant was Herman Niemeyer. For after two years of unparalleled prosperity Mr. Niemeyer had fallen into the hands of the law and he stood now in the prisoner's dock, which is a mere figure of speech, for there was no prisoner's dock and Mr. Niemeyer sat in a comfortable chair near the counsel table, facing a charge of a violation of the Volstead Act. The indefatigable agents of the government, it seems, had discovered a case of beer in Mr. Niemeyer's limousine.

The courtroom was crowded. Behind

the railing was the usual throng of bootleggers, their friends, wives, mothers and sweethearts, and on the other side were their legal representatives, also Mr. Niemeyer attired in white spats and a checkered suit and without doubt the most distinguished looking of them all. On two long benches at His Honor's right sat a body of queer appearing men. Low of brow, hairy, and with jaws that worked ceaselessly at cud, these ruminants might have easily been mistaken for an anthropological exhibit, but as a matter of fact they were the twelve good men and true who constituted the jury.

Slowly the trial dragged on. There were a number of sharp clashes between the district attorney, Mr. Simms, and the counsel for the defense, the redoubtable Barker J. Harker. Judge Hawper fought flies and banged on the rostrum with his gavel, injecting at times into the argument vitriolic comment that delighted the audience. But this was only the usual Hawperian manner; he had been known to behave in the same fashion at a memorial exercise.

As the hands of the clock approached the noon hour Judge Hawper's impatience became the greater. He was getting thirsty; visions of tall ice-filled glasses floated before his eyes and he wanted to wind up the Niemeyer business and get up to the club. Another thing on his mind was his determination to get Niemeyer free. This last did not disturb him much, for in the intricate machinery of the law there are many chances for the counsel for defense to drop a monkey wrench,

especially if aided by the friendly assistance of the court.

Herman Niemeyer had been, of course, as you will recall, a waiter in the club grillroom. In his twenty-odd years of service he had administered to the wants of Judge Hawper for a like period, and he recalled now, and with some satisfaction, the thousand and one nights in the pre-Volstead days when he sat behind the bar reading the *Nation* into the wee hours of the morning until the time would arrive when Judge Hawper and his crony, old Barker J. Harper, would get comfortably saturated enough to go home and go to bed.

Closing argument was at hand. The issue in the case, it appears, was whether or not the evidence found in the Niemeyer car contained more than the statutory amount of alcohol. Defense claimed less than one-half of one per cent; the government contended that the alcoholic content was nearer four.

"They say that this is near-beer!" shouted the district attorney, holding aloft a gaudily labeled bottle. "Absurd, gentlemen of the jury, *absurd!* An analysis by our chemist shows that it contains three and eighty-four hundredths per cent and is in fact *genuine Pilsener beer*. It's *Pilsener beer*, not the cheap bellywash made in this country, gentlemen of the jury, remember that. It's beer only afforded by the rich—an ambrosia brewed of the finest malt barley and Bohemian hops, a beer, gentlemen, that has made the city of Pilsen famous the world over!"

Here the jury began to show signs of restiveness and there were low animal-like cries from the rear bench, whereat Judge Hawper pounded vigorously with his gavel.

"Who of you, gentlemen of the jury," continued Simms, "who has ever tasted the delicious brew known as Pilsener would be fooled that this exhibit is near-beer! It's not a poor man's drink, gentlemen; oh, no! It's the beverage of the rich. Made of the finest hops it is only slightly bitter with, gentlemen, a most exquisite flavor."

At this moment Judge Hawper experienced a great and sudden longing for the exhibit being flourished so recklessly in the hands of the district attorney. His mouth felt as though lined with cotton batting and he formed in his mind the fate of "Exhibit A" immediately after the noon adjournment.

"Genuine Pilsener of this particular kind, gentlemen of the jury, is light in color and has a characteristic creamy foam," went on the prosecutor. "It is delicately aromatic, totally unlike anything made in this country. See!" he cried, and before the startled Hawper could make protest, he produced from his pocket a glittering device and pried off the metal cap. Slowly a fluffy column of foam came from the neck of the bottle and the smell of Pilsener beer was wafted to the nostrils of court and jury.

"Mr. Simms, Mr. Simms," shouted Judge Hawper, pounding with his gavel, "your action is highly improper! It's inflammatory, sir, unethical — sharp practice!"

Taking his cue from the court, the honorable Barker J. Harker rose slowly to his feet, his countenance registering both indignation and amazement, emotions, by the way, to which he was stranger.

"If Your Honor, please," he began in a choking voice, "never in my forty years of practice at the bar have I witnessed a more flagrant violation of the rules. I am astonished that the district attorney should stoop to such an action and, sir, I am seriously considering right now of bringing the matter to the attention of the Bar Association. Your Honor will, of course, dismiss the jury and instruct the clerk to enter a notation of mistrial in this case."

"I can do nothing else," agreed Hawper. "The jury is dismissed and the clerk will make the proper entry. And now, gentlemen, as I have been asked to officiate this afternoon in the capacity of honorary pallbearer, I will adjourn court for the day."

Immediately there was a din of gavels from various parts of the room, a

hoarse shouting by bailiffs, and the noise and confusion of a score or more bootleggers with their friends, wives, mothers and sweethearts leaving the room.

Losing no time, Judge Hawper slid sidewise out of his swivel chair and, walking rapidly into his chambers, slammed and locked the door. He doffed his gown and threw it into a corner of the room, and then—opening another door that let into the district attorney's office—summoned that worthy to appear in his chambers at once.

"For God's sake, Charley," he gasped at Simms's entrance, "where is some of that beer?"

Mr. Simms hesitated.

Though he had held office a number of years he stood in awe of Hawper and experienced as he was with the Judge's tantrums he realized now that he was in no humor to be parleyed with.

"It's gone," he said.

"Gone? Gone where? Wherever it's gone, you go get it! I want six bottles right now—or maybe I'll drink a dozen. I feel like I'd eaten a barrel of sponges. Hurry!"

"There ain't any more," admitted Simms, reddening.

"What?" queried Hawper sharply. "Do you mean to tell me that the beer is not here?"

Simms nodded wretchedly.

"Sir, I will inform you that all exhibits are in the custody of this court. They are to be used for legal purposes, sir, and for no other. Damme, Simms, I've got a notion of fining you for contempt!"

"Well, Judge, I—"

"No alibis, Mr. Simms," interrupted Hawper. "What I want to know is—*what became of that beer*. Who got it?"

"The enforcement officers drank about half of it before I could get it away from them; the United States marshal stole three bottles, the cashier in the Internal Revenue office stole two, a stenographer begged a couple for her sick grandmother, a Department of Justice official took four, I gave a few to an Assistant Secretary of the Interior who was out here the other day, a

Treasury official took a couple and—"

"Quite a party you have been putting on, Mr. Simms. What are you running for? Certainly, Mr. Simms, at your age and station in life you have not the Presidential bee? If so I congratulate you on having found a certain and sure way of getting at least the nomination. Damme, if I had a hundred cases of beer I could elect a Jewish Chinaman!"

"Well, Judge, I—"

"That will be all, Mr. Simms. Kindly remember in the future that any more beer coming into the jurisdiction of this court will be attended to by me. Kindly do that, Mr. Simms, for if you should forget it you will have a great deal of time at your disposal to reflect on the matter in solitary confinement in the Atlanta penitentiary. That will be all, Mr. Simms. You may go."

The district attorney fled, and Judge Hawper after swearing for a few minutes sat down in a chair to fan himself into something that approached calmness.

"I've just got to have some beer," he said to himself. "Nothing else will do—six cold bottles of beer. God, I believe I could drink a keg!"

Now the desires of a federal judge are matters of concern to many and of this Judge Hawper was not unaware. A hint dropped here and there is most frequently fruitful of results and in his great yearning Hawper resolved to hint.

"Someone ought to fix me up at the club," he muttered. "Anyhow I'll go try."

And with this, and quite forgetful of his promised functioning as honorary pallbearer, he got his hat and walked out of his chambers.

II

It was a little after one when Judge Hawper entered the club. His long walk through the hot streets had done nothing toward alleviating his thirst, though it did give him time to form a plan of action. There were a number of club gentlemen whom he decided to approach

in the matter. Some of these he had favored in various ways, largely to their pecuniary gain, and there were others from whom gratitude might be expected for entirely different reasons.

Making his way to his usual chair in a quiet corner of the lounge he found it a bald and dilapidated wallow of shiny leather, occupied by another. Judge Hawper stared unbelievably, whereat the frightened occupant rose from the seat and fled the room.

"Boy," called the Judge to a passing bellhop, "ask the doorman for a list of members now in the club. I want to see who's here."

"Yes, sir," said the boy, executing an about face. "Right away, sir."

During the wait that followed Judge Hawper glared at two non-resident members who were rather loudly talking baseball, squashing them quite effectually, rebuffed a gentleman who seemed determined to shake hands and declined three cigars and a ticket to a charity bazaar. He intimated, rather by action than verbally, that matters of large importance were under consideration and that he could not be disturbed.

The appearance, finally, of the boy with the list disclosed the fact that there were some forty club members scattered through the building.

Hawper adjusted his glasses and carefully looked over the names.

"Boy," he said, "tell Mr. John W. Snodfish to come here. Tell him that Judge Hawper wishes to see him immediately."

"Yes, sir," said the boy, diving through the door.

Notwithstanding the fact that Mr. Snodfish was at that moment eating his lunch in a dining-room several floors overhead, he materialized almost instantly. He even carried a napkin in his hand, so great was his haste, and with a thumb and forefinger was making surreptitious attempts at removing a shad bone lodged behind a back tooth.

Mr. John W. Snodfish was somebody's brother-in-law and in consequence of this fact had been made receiver for the local street car company.

Prior to this employment, Mr. Snodfish's activities had been largely engaged in the operation of a Sunday School class and in writing communications to the papers under the nom de plume of "Pro Bono Publico." As a Sunday School superintendent he was a mild appearing man with a soft, whispering voice; now, after six months at the receivership crib, he had the manners of a boss canvasman and had acquired the vocal powers of an auctioneer. When he appeared, however, before Judge Hawper these transformations had vanished and he was the Mr. Snodfish of old.

"Yes, Judge," he announced silkily, "I'm here."

"Sit down, Snodfish," ordered Hawper, "I want a few words with you."

"Certainly, Judge, certainly. It gives me great pleasure to—"

"Snodfish, I hope you haven't forgotten that I appointed you receiver for the street car company—"

"Oh, no, Judge. I—"

"Mr. Snodfish, I would advise you to let me do the talking," snapped Hawper irritably. "I can rescind that order at any time."

The cold perspiration broke out on Mr. Snodfish's forehead, a terror seized him, and in his distraction he made a feeble and ineffectual effort to dislodge the shad bone.

"What in hell are you trying to do, Snodfish?" demanded Hawper, staring angrily. "Take your hand out of your mouth, sit up straight in your chair, and listen to me."

"Oh yes, Judge, I will," said Mr. Snodfish, hastily complying. "Indeed I will."

"Well then do and shut up . . . Now let's see, where was I? Oh yes—the matter of the receivership. You have such a devilish habit of interruption, Snodfish, that I have been unable to get a word edgewise. If you were in my court, sir, I would fine you for contempt."

Mr. Snodfish opened his mouth to protest, but a warning wiggle of Judge Hawper's finger silenced him.

"Now, sir, if I may be allowed to speak I will get to the matter that is on my mind as briefly as possible. Snodfish, your job pays you pretty well—about two thousand dollars a month, I think it is, or even a little better."

The receiver for the street car company nodded.

"You've been in since April," continued Hawper, "and have taken down a little over twelve thousand dollars—more money than you ever saw before in your life. You're riding around in an automobile, I have noticed, and you have joined this club, and you have played the fool generally including taking up golf, which is, sir, the lowest form of entertainment known next to spitting at a mark. However, that is neither here nor there with the court. What you do with your salary, sir, is nothing to me. I am demanding none of it, of course; in fact I have never asked anything of you—not even the appointment of a motorman or a conductor. However, Mr. Snodfish, if you have any feeling of gratitude there is one thing that you can do for me."

"Anything!" breathed Snodfish.

"Well then, sir, you can get for me this afternoon six cold bottles of beer."

"Beer!" exclaimed Mr. Snodfish, aghast at the word. "Why, Judge, I haven't the slightest idea of where to get it. And besides—"

"Very well, Mr. Snodfish, you may stand aside," interrupted Hawper sharply. "I wish you good day, sir."

In his distress the unfortunate Mr. Snodfish reached again for the shad bone.

"I will ask you," said Judge Hawper crisply, "not to endeavor to turn yourself inside out in my presence. If you will have the kindness of retiring elsewhere, sir, you may pull your vicera out through your teeth and you may wind it around your neck, sir, for all I give a damn!"

The wretched Snodfish got out of the room somehow—the interview seemed like a horrible dream to him afterward—and fighting off an inclination to faint sent out a hurry call to his brother-in-

law who was no other than Mr. Frederick Finney, president of the Second National Bank. Mr. Finney happened at the moment to be playing at billiards with Mr. C. Rambeau Johnson, stocks and bonds, and after hearing a disjointed and somewhat hysterical account of the affair from Mr. Snodfish they dropped their cues and hastened down into the lounge to verify the account.

"My dear sir," protested Mr. Finney, "what you are asking of Mr. Snodfish is quite impossible. You may not know that Mr. Snodfish has long been identified with Sunday School work and naturally he would be entirely unfamiliar with the ways and means of procuring what you desire."

"Indeed!" commented Hawper ironically. "You interest me—both of you. Sit down! It occurs to me, Finney, that you might be able to accomplish that which is beyond the ingenuity and resources of Mr. Snodfish."

"Are you asking *me* to get you the beer?" inquired Mr. Finney with a show of spirit. "Asking *me*?"

"I am only suggesting it, sir. Incidentally I am calling your attention to the fact that certain *quo warranto* proceedings in which your bank is named as defendant are pending in my court."

Mr. Finney paled.

"Our attorney assures us that they amount to nothing," he said, vainly attempting an air of nonchalance.

Judge Hawper smiled sourly.

"It has been my observation that attorneys sometimes do make such assertions to their clients—in fact they most invariably do. Nevertheless, I gain from the reports that the courts are continuing to pile up decisions for plaintiffs. Finney, if you have any gumption at all you know that your bank is facing a very real peril. Almost any order of court would start a thousand depositors at your doors before breakfast."

"I think I shall be going," hastily put in Mr. Johnson, looking at his watch. "The matter between you gentlemen seems largely personal, and—"

"Please do not hurry away," im-

plored Judge Hawper with mock anxiety. "Your presence here is most opportune. If I am not mistaken the euphonious name of C. Rambeau Johnson also appears on my docket. A little matter regarding your income tax, was it not? I presume that your attorney has likewise informed you that the charges amount to nothing. The maximum penalty is, if I remember correctly, Mr. Johnson, a fine of five thousand dollars and a sentence of five years in the penitentiary—or both. Of course, Mr. Johnson, if you regard these things as mere trifles I shall feel less inclined to be swayed by sympathetic emotions when your case comes to trial."

"Good God, Judge, you wouldn't—"

"Six cold bottles of beer this afternoon might influence the decisions of the court. The court is human, you know, and very thirsty. It occurs to me that you two gentlemen would make a splendid team to go fetch it, and if you need any assistance I suggest that you intimate the idea to Mr. Hobson of the telephone company, whom I noticed in the lobby as I came in; you might also convey the thought to some of the railroad officials that hang around here. In your labors you may require a special engine or a special train or a steamboat or a balloon, the details do not interest me, but in no case fail to have those six cold bottles here by three o'clock this afternoon. Gentlemen, I wish you success."

Mr. Johnson glanced apprehensively at his friend.

"Come on Finney, we've got no time to lose."

III

OUT in the Forest Grove section of the city the Niemeyer residence sat well back from the street in a yard that was almost a park. The house, a replica of a Rhenish castle, had been built by a brewer, now bankrupt, and had been purchased by Mr. Niemeyer at a price that he considered a bargain. Here his wife, Minnie, served five meals a day to an interesting family that included Lorraine Antoinette Niemeyer, who as-

pired to the movies, and Wilhelm and Rudolph Niemeyer who, doubtlessly influenced by their father's business success, were ambitious to become chemical engineers. Little was known of them in the neighborhood beyond the fact that Mr. Niemeyer departed for the business district rather late in the morning, usually in the touring car though on occasion he used the limousine. According to the mailman, Mr. Niemeyer spoke five languages and received a great deal of mail from abroad where, the mailman thought, he had been associated in banking interests with the Rothschilds.

"I never had no doubt about it," said Mr. Niemeyer, helping himself to some more of the liverwurst. "I never worried a bit."

"No! Herman!" queried his wife, with a rising inflection, "No?"

"No," said Mr. Niemeyer with finality. "Not a bit."

He was at luncheon and sat at the Circassian walnut table in his shirt sleeves, incidentally exhibiting a pair of bright red suspenders.

"I couldn't lose," he said, gesturing with his knife. "You see me and old Barker Harker and Judge Hawper used to get drunk too often together."

"You never told that before."

"Well, I wasn't exactly *with* 'em. They would be sitting at a table in the grill and I would be waitin' on 'em, but most of the time I took a drink whenever they did, so it amounts to the same thing. Twice they brought me home in a hack."

"I am glad those days are over," sighed Mrs. Niemeyer. "You can afford to associate with better people now, Herman."

"There ain't no better people than them two," declared Mr. Niemeyer. "They don't make 'em no better. They used to get full and quarrel like cats and dogs, and the next day they'd make up and get full all over again. Them were the good old days, believe me!"

"Well," said his wife, with an air of dismissing an unpleasant topic, "I'm glad the Judge let you go."

"I'll say he did. He's my pal."

At that moment a servant—the Niemeyers kept three—announced the arrival of two strange gentlemen who desired to see Mr. Niemeyer and who were then waiting on the front veranda. Some rapid-fire conversation in German ensued and it was only after the maid had voiced her belief that they were "all right" that Mr. Niemeyer rose from his seat and went to the front door.

"Hello there, Niemeyer," greeted one of the men effusively. "Remember me, don't you?"

"I certainly do," returned Niemeyer rather coldly. "I remember you ever since the day you put in the kick on me to the house committee. And over nothing at all it was—spilling a plate of chowder on your vest. Your name is Binney, ain't it? Or it's Kinney or Hinney or Dinney—something like that."

"It's Finney," said that individual. "Of course you remember Mr. Johnson."

"Yes, I remember him," admitted Niemeyer, staring hard at Johnson. "He was on the committee at the time and voted to fire me."

"Oh, come now, Niemeyer, why not let bygones be bygones?"

"The neighbors call me Mister Niemeyer," volunteered Niemeyer coolly.

Mr. Finney emitted a laugh more noisy than sincere.

"Say," he said, "I'll do better than that. I'll call you 'Herman.'"

"I think I like 'Mister' the best," contended Niemeyer stolidly. "I think it sounds better."

Mr. Finney reddened.

"Oh very well. Have your way about it, Mr. Niemeyer. Now, Mr. Niemeyer, the thing we have come out to see you about is this—we want you to get us a few bottles of beer."

"Is that so," remarked Niemeyer woodenly. "How do you get like that?"

"Have you got it—the beer, Mr. Niemeyer?"

"Yes, I've got it. A case of Pilsener—the only one this side of Bermuda."

"Good! Just wrap up about six bottles and we will be on our way."

"It ain't for sale, gents," stated Mr. Niemeyer solemnly. "I have donated it to the Smithsonian Institute."

"Oh, come now, Niemeyer," put in Mr. Johnson, pulling from his pocket a wad of currency. "Just say what you want for it."

"As I remarked before, the neighbors call me Mister Niemeyer."

"Very well then, Mister Niemeyer it is. Now what do you want for it?"

"Do you remember when you was on the house committee and you fired old Joe, the nightwatchman, for gettin' drunk and goin' to sleep?"

"Well, yes, I do remember that."

"Do you remember the time you sent back the lamb chops I brought you in the grill, sayin' that they were too well done?"

"No, I don't," said Mr. Johnson. "But that's neither here nor there. The question is what do you want for the beer?"

"Oh, it's neither here nor there, isn't it?" queried Niemeyer. "Well then don't let me detain you, gents."

"Would fifty dollars interest you?" inquired Finney sharply.

"Fifty dollars? Say, I just paid six thousand for an automobile and fifty wouldn't buy a tire."

"A hundred," bid Mr. Johnson. "Let's wind this farce up and get away."

"Ain't you funny!" commented Niemeyer slangily. "I'll give you two hundred and not another cent," said the bank president angrily.

"Remember the time you told the manager you thought I was a German spy, Mr. Finney?"

Mr. Finney flushed. "Oh well, that was during the war."

Mr. Johnson with a sudden idea made an attack from a new angle.

"Say," he said, "there's a half dozen of us wants this beer. Would you sell it to Mr. Hobson?"

"He was chairman of the house committee at the time I nearly lost my job. He voted to fire me."

"How about Mr. Snodfish?"

"Snodfish? I don't recall him. I don't know him."

"He's a new member," explained Johnson. "He's only been in three or four months."

"I've made it a rule never to meet new members," said Niemeyer, grinning. "The old guard are good enough for me."

Mr. Johnson turned angrily to his companion.

"Come on, Finney. This fellow is seeking revenge. It's plain he will not do business with us at any price."

"Don't hurry off, gents," said Niemeyer cheerfully. "I've got a lot of other things to remind you of."

Mr. Finney took one last chance.

"Niemeyer," he said, "I'll give you an even thousand dollars for those six bottles of beer."

"Remember the time you bawled me out in the big dining-room and said your soup was cold, Mr. Finney?"

Without another word the two men turned and walked down the steps.

Niemeyer's long-deferred day of vengeance had arrived, and now smiling happily he strained his ears for some sweet morsel of comment between the two men.

"I hate to think what old Hawper will say to us when we get back,"

groaned Johnson. "I'd rather face a grizzly."

It was a matter of several moments before any possible significance of the remark could penetrate Niemeyer's brain. Then he called out after them.

"Wait a minute! What's that about Judge Hawper? What's he got to do with it?"

Mr. Finney turned and slowly and with evident reluctance retraced his footsteps.

"Only this, Niemeyer," he said, "it's Judge Hawper who wants the beer. He told us to get it for him—six cold bottles."

"It's for Judge Hawper?" shouted Niemeyer excitedly. "Why in the devil didn't you say that in the first place? Judge Hawper can have anything I've got! You go tell him I'll have it there in twenty minutes."

III

At a little after three Judge Hawper, alone in a small private dining-room, placed the sixth empty Pilsener bottle in the row of five others on the table in front of him. A look of great and sweet contentment wreathed his countenance and he felt at peace with all the world.

"Well," he murmured drowsily, "it pays to drop a hint now and then."



ALL men attempt to forget themselves. Their customary method is by remembering a woman.



MISOGYNIST: a man who has been married many times.



The Higher Learning in America

XI

Smith College

By Louise Patterson Guyol

I

SMITH girls are essentially fad-dists. They are also the best-dressed girls of any college, except perhaps Vassar; and in addition they have an inordinate capacity for idleness. These three are the most obvious of their superficial characteristics. Let a new idea put a timid head into Northampton and it immediately becomes the mascot of the college. It is petted and made much of, fed on universal adoration, and finally surfeited to death. Earrings? They dangle from two thousand pairs of ears. Bridge? Ten "dummies" sit tense in every house of forty members. Eskimo Pie? It drips lusciously up and down every street. As to clothing, that outward visible sign of inward grace, it reveals a very great grace indeed. Although fad is still present, it is fad grown charming, submissive, seldom mad or rampant. It brings tweed suits of delicate lavender or blue; it walks softly in low-heeled shoes and colored silkwool stockings. It huddles across the campus in monstrous fur coats; eloquent tribute to winter in New England.

And idling! A second Stevenson is sorely needed to defend the idleness that gulps down every spare moment and begs for more. It is an idleness that is absolutely necessary for constructive thinking. It is soothing syrup to a desperately sore throat. There is terrible wear and

tear to soul and temper in every most ordinary day of college life. Jostling and chattering by one thousand nine hundred ninety-nine other madly hurrying young creatures; satirizing by cynical members of the Faculty; work that clamors unforgivably, be it loved or despised. There are class meetings, club meetings, conferences, demands for time and money and service. Worst of all, perhaps, is the inescapable feeling that there is so much to be done that it can never be finished. Hence we do nothing with those odd moments we find tucked into crevices of the day.

This is to say, we sit in our rooms clandestinely discussing the far vivid future instead of the vague classes of next day. We read—novels so new that their eyes are scarcely open; Hardy and Meredith for the epicurean; Oscar Wilde, Shaw, Barrie, Kipling, Alice in Wonderland, Tolstoi. Poetry of one sort or another graces or disgraces every bookshelf. Swinburne, Rupert Brooke, Shelley, Browning, Alfred Noyes, Edna St. Vincent Millay, make a fine jumble. "The Sheik" spends his little day in our midst; Stevenson comes, and is a permanent resident. "Hedda Gabler" rivals "Mademoiselle de Maupin"; both involve intimate discussion, cause violent reactions, and at least succeed in an intellectual stimulation that is almost intoxication. We go to moving pictures, concerts, plays. Rodolf Valentino, Jascha Heifertz and Ruth Chat-

terton are adored in turn and with apparent equality.

In spite of this, there is really a feeling of discrimination that in the end realizes each for what it is worth. It is only an unfortunate monotony of vocabulary that tends to group "The Sheik" and Shakespeare as "marvelous"; peppermint patties and the cleverest quip as "heavenly"; a new hat, a head of bobbed hair, a sunset, as "glorious." While slang is not ruler, it is at least prime minister. One may be "thrilled to tears" or "bored to tears." "My dear" is equivalent to saying "My dear, that man gave us the most fiendish assignment!" "Dumbbell" is, on the contrary, almost a term of endearment. Both are as common as the AMO of Latin grammar. "Fussing" is a college word. At Smith it does not mean kissing, but is used in the simple sense of entertaining someone not peculiar to the college, usually a man. "Cramming" and "flunking" are both frequent occurrences. An "A-hound" or a "greasy grind" is as despised as her name, though normally good marks are admired. "Celebs" and "celeb-seekers" are the famous, and their infamous following. A dictionary of Smith slang could be compiled without need of research.

For definite recreation, the Smith girl eats. There are more tea-houses than churches in Northampton, and you must remember that it is a New England town. There are little dainty places that serve ambrosial tea and elfin sandwiches. There are substantial places boasting steak, French fried, strawberry shortcake. There are conveniently accessible places to rush into at five minutes before ten for hot dogs or ice cream cones. A dozen drugstores serve inimitable sundaes and frappés: from some college houses there are regular nine-thirty expeditions to go "frapping." Coffee is on tap everywhere in town, a veritable Pierian Spring and Fountain of Youth. Breakfast parties occur every Sunday

morning, where sweet rolls by the dozen, coffee by the percolatorful, and conversation en masse provide hearty sustenance. Hot suppers on cold nights, cool lunches on warm days, and all manner of candy and fruit to fill in the chinks between meals—these make endurable a life otherwise barren of adventure.

In company with this quest for gustatory entertainment, comes its converse, the typically college habit of dieting. A few serious-minded individuals go at it systematically, by calories. Others make it an intermittent affair, beginning anew the first of each month. Many quibbles arise as to whether eating is constructive or destructive. There is every grade of diet and exercise; no one is ever contented with herself as she is—"My dear, if I were only as (thin) as you!" Somewhat the same (fat) trivial rivalry exists in the matter of bobbed hair, except that the "bobs" are usually contented, the "longs" mildly envious or deprecatory. Perhaps one girl in seven has bobbed hair; it has been increasing in popularity steadily within the last four years, and is acknowledged to be more comfortable, convenient, and becoming.

II

THE campus is called by those who particularly love it, "small but cosy." It is picturesque except in the early spring and late fall, beautiful without the harmony born of architectural symmetry. The one intrinsically lovely building on the campus is only there by virtue of precedent, and does not belong at all—the little grey stone Episcopal church, green ivy clad in spring, crimson in autumn, separated from the actual campus by a hedge and shrubbery. The recitation halls and campus houses are red brick, dull rather than mellow, covered with the whispering ivy. There is Music Hall, tiny and inadequate.

"Heavenly Hash" we call the mixture of violin, piano and human voice that emanates from its windows. There is the Hillyet Art Gallery, a college possession, including in its collection representatives of Whistler, Abbott H. Thayer, Dwight W. Tryon, Millet, Aldegraver and a number of other types.

The library, or Libe, is ordinary except for one unique feature, the Browsing Room, with inspiration in its very name. It is a large, softly carpeted room, with high windows and deep chairs, filled with luxurious reading-matter that varies from Balzac to Browning, Emerson to Ibsen. Into this room can come no paper, no pen, no text-book. It is for browsing only, and its atmosphere is hallowed. John M. Greene Hall is the big pillared auditorium where chapel is held every morning but Sunday, a broad-minded service involving little or all religion. The most impressive moment is just before the organ, a great four-manual affair, one of the finest in this country, begins to play. There is a deep murmur of voices filling the hall like water rushing from a mighty faucet. Then the organ sounds a tentative note; and the faucet is suddenly turned off, every voice stops, and there is only the flood of music pouring over everything.

There is a Botanical Garden and a plant-house, with rooms for pale orchids and sprawling cacti, and one room overgrown with huge ferns, rubber plants, strange little scarlet and lavender blossoms and trees with spreading leaves, that is like a morsel of the tropics. The observatory stands on a small hill not far away, accompanied by the inevitable ivy: a beautiful place for the imagination to play, with many flowering bushes covering the slope of its hill, and stars and sunsets very intimate from its roof. Half a dozen recitation halls lift their prosaic heads from various parts of the campus, and hum with classes from nine till five or six.

Curricular activities are the bane of a Freshman-Sophomore existence. They are a burden to the soul for two years, and even after that may dog the steps of the poor unfortunate who is literary and flunks a science, or mathematical and cannot pass French. But if they are a burden to the soul, they also force it to behold for the first time long vistas of unimagined interests. Tentative ventures into paths psychological or linguistic often result in definite expeditions down those paths, and even succeed in transforming an idler along the way into a walker with a goal to reach. During each of these first two years only three hours out of sixteen are elective, unless some requirement is postponed. This leaves an absolutely free field for the last two years. It gives the student a basis of science, history and languages, a knowledge of the Bible and the elements of psychology and logic. It also accounts partly for the fact that so many Freshmen and Sophomores hate college with a bitter hatred. But when they begin specialization in a chosen subject, at the opening of the Junior year, they develop sincere love of the college and lose their tendency to evade thought, work and classes. In their specialization, students are aided by a wide variety of lecturers culled from every profession and famous in their line. Professors and presidents from Harvard, Yale, Princeton; ambassadors, journalists, moving picture actresses, doctors; Madame Curie, on whom Smith conferred an honorary degree; all have showered on us the fruits of their experience and vocabulary, in French, Italian, German, English.

Students whose marks have been up to a certain average have the privilege of studying under the Special Honors System, instituted for the first time at Smith in 1921. According to this plan the student attends no classes, but works intensively by herself on various aspects of one subject. Every week or two

she consults an instructor, who plays guide, philosopher and friend to her efforts. It is a system more thorough, harder, somewhat narrower but decidedly deeper than the usual system. Midyear and Final examinations are eliminated; at the end of her Senior year she must take a comprehensive examination covering her subject completely. The Special Honors System is far more calculated to produce scholars than the ordinary method of instruction.

III

CLOSELY interwoven with academic preoccupations are social and sportive tendencies. If a man is a social creature, what then is not woman? From Freshman Frolic, held the first week of the first semester, to the *Prom*, always implied in the word college, there are diversities of entertainment for mind and body. Freshman Frolic in an unpremeditated manner shows the new class how small and minor, as it were, it really is. It collects the Freshmen in the gymnasium, in company with all the upperclassmen the building will hold, and by unsystematic introductions numbs their arms to the shoulder with a thousand handshakes. Mountain Day, late in October, spills out most of the girls from the college and sends them exploring the little blue mountains that huddle Northampton in their midst. Mt. Tom, the Holyoke range, Sugarloaf, and as many again offer parties of girls a view of broad meadows and the crooked muddy Connecticut made fair and silver by distance. The hills of Hamp. are friendly hills, gentle, beautiful, as many colors during the day as there are hours, covered with bright leaves in the fall and massed pink laurel in June. They and the river bear witness to a long series of "bats" and hikes every sunny Saturday in spring and autumn. A hike is a long walk to the accompaniment of song and sand-

wiches. A "bat" is a glorified hike to the tune of bonfires and supper at the end, hot dogs burnt and delicious, coffee more delicious, drunk from paper cups that lend an ineffable flavor of wax, apples that have been used to play ball with first. There are even "batting societies out of sheer exuberance" that have one sole avowed destiny.

Washington's Birthday bears the Smithsonian title of Rally Day. It is a formal observance of memorial exercises, attended by the college in a body. The four classes sit in assigned sections of John M. Greene Hall, all dressed in white, each girl wearing a ribbon of her own class color. A white-clad choir occupies the back of the platform, on the front of which sit the Faculty in their robes of various degree. It is an indescribably impressive sight. No higher homage could be paid it than the fact that on Rally Day homesick Freshmen first see some virtue in college.

Sophomore Carnival takes place at any time between the first of January and the first of March. It usually has to be postponed twice on account of snow, once because the ice is unsafe, and several times because of rain. When the elements finally concur, Paradise, the diminutive river and miniature pond where Smith skates and plays at crew practice, is bedecked with colored lanterns, a little wooden shack appears in the middle of the ice for the orchestra, and the Freshmen, under the guidance of the Sophomores, skate officially for an evening. Skating stunts performed by expert undergraduates are supplemented by the inevitable coffee and doughnuts.

The occasion dedicated to third year classmen is dignified with the title "Junior Frolic," and is an utterly secret affair at which no member of another class may appear, unless by invitation. Hardy Freshmen and Sophomores may essay an entrance, hiding in the gymnasium,

where the Juniors frolic, early in the afternoon, armed with a paper bag of sandwiches to serve as dinner. Every portion of the building has been used as a hiding-place, from the coal-cellar to the hollow steps leading up to the platform in the gymnasium proper. One year a bold Sophomore climbed the ropes and hid on the rafters, pulling the ropes themselves up after her in drawbridge style, and settled comfortably and audaciously with a book. It took the janitor, and assistant, and a large ladder to dislodge her. The Juniors are alert and deadly. Invaders captured may be handcuffed together, faces painted with iodine or green ink, hair filled with flour; they may be put wholesale and fully clad under the showers and sent home disgraced and dripping. What goes on at the Frolic itself can not be revealed. There are whispers of barbaric costumes and delectable refreshments; but only Juniors should possess actual and accurate knowledge.

Spring brings Glee Club, Junior Prom., and step sings. The latter are among the pet traditions and events of the college. They begin approximately the first of May, and take place every Tuesday and Friday until Commencement. The Seniors, five hundred strong, sit on the broad stone steps of the Students' Building, with the other classes grouped around to form a hollow square. The classes sing to each other, to Spring, to the college, to the president, even to the "little angleworms that wiggle on the walk." Every sing ends with the Smith "Alma Mater." A typical step song, of pathetic eloquence, is the following, sung by the class of '21.

Tune: Daddy, get your Baby out of Jail.

Daddy, get your daughter out of debt!
Reimburse your little pet;
They've been treating me so mean—
When my bills are overdue they tell the Dean!
I'd like to buy a dainty dotted Swiss,
But I've more pressing needs than this:
My winter furs aren't paid for yet—
Daddy, get your daughter out of debt!

Although these sings only last from seven to seven-thirty in the evening, they are more enthusiastically anticipated than almost anything else of the whole year. It is partly for the music itself, sufficiently harmonious if not thoroughly so; partly for the spring weather, which is alluring and bewitching in Northampton of an early evening; and partly for the delight of hearing "Faculty breaks" vociferously paraded by the Seniors, after the following highly effective manner:

Where O where is Miss B—

Where O where is Miss B—

Where O where is Miss B—

Gone to the Faculty Meeting.

She went up on the forty-inch telescope,

She went up on the forty-inch telescope,

She went up on the forty-inch telescope,

Gone to the Faculty Meeting.

(*Chanted in chorus*) Her last words were:

All those who want to look at Venus, see
me at nine o'clock!

(*Sung*) Gone to the Faculty Meeting!

That joke did originate in the Astronomy Department at Smith; I saw it myself, written in large unsuspecting letters on the Observatory blackboard, my Freshman year. Since then it has gone the way of Kipling's "Consequences of a Lie," and has made a brief appearance in most of the college humorous publications in the country.

The Smith College Glee Club is an enterprising organization, and undertakes light opera in lieu of the usual disjointed concert. It has sung its way through "The Mikado," "Chimes of Normandy," and "H. M. S. Pinafore" with vast success, marred only by the fact that Smith has no theatre of its own, and John M. Greene is inadequate except as a chapel or lecture hall. But the Glee Club is given an adequate welcome at its annual appearance. Glee Club and Junior Prom. are the only times when men invade Northampton under the sanction of college authority. Peculiar occasions, these, on which it is the lady who plays escort and pays bills; she purchases tickets for the concert,

orders meals and pays for them before the highly embarrassed man has even arrived at his pocket, and promenades him blatantly about the Campus before the envying and critical eyes of a thousand-odd non-fussers. Otherwise neither occasion is unique, except that after them the campus and the steps of the houses are strewn with cigarette-stubs as well as the ordinary hairpins. The bounds of the college could be traced by the millions of hairpins thickly scattered over them, though within the last three years they have been diminishing in quantity. This may be on account of the enormous increase of bobbed hair, which eliminates hairpins and replaces them with permanent waves. But Smith is still too conservative to veto the rule against the girls' smoking. That may go in time, after a mighty struggle and casualties on both sides. There is some protest against it now, unapparent, unorganized, but plainly present. There are girls who do smoke, which breeds hypocrisy; many girls who like to and who do at home, but either do not care or do not dare to break the rule; girls who do not and would not anyway, who would consequently not be affected by the change. So—off with the old!

This leads to the comment that the Smith girl is, by and large, not a lawbreaker. The average of breakage is probably lower than in most communities. There is some, anywhere, in towns, churches, families, with traditions the oldest and noblest. It is something never to be eradicated until man lives no longer in groups but like Timon of Athens. However, there are not a great many rules in college that tempt to break, and enough to occupy the time pleasantly without troubling to reach after forbidden fruit; which after all comes high.

A pseudo-Student Government and a semi-honor-system aid in superimposing honesty. The student takes just enough part in electing officers

and voting on rules to make her feel a sense of propriety and a resultant protective instinct. The best example of this is the ten o'clock rule, revolutionized this year, to the anguish of the *alumnæ*. (*Could it be sour grapes?*) It formerly provided that every girl should be in her own room at ten, with lights out; as it was jocosely but aptly expressed, "in a horizontal position between the sheets." Two nights each week light cuts were granted, and the happy maiden could sit up as late as she pleased. This rule, made by the Powers that Were, was more resented and evaded than any other before or since. As it was recast last winter, it provides that every girl must be in her own room at ten, but may keep her light on as late as she will any night, whether it be with academic intentions or merely to read the "*Smart Set*." This privilege has been little abused, and the health of the students has endured in spite of vociferous fears on the part of *alumnæ*. The Student Government Board and the Judicial Board are composed of students, and a student is at the head of each. It is a thankless task to be either President of the Student Council or Chairman of the Judicial Board. It demands an immense amount of work and time, certain unavoidable unpopularity, and absolute intimacy with every rule, custom and regulation. It requires an extremely high academic standing for election, and is one of the greatest honors possible in college.

The Faculty of Instruction constitute an advisory body, with a good share of power as well. They number nearly two hundred, graduating downward from the President, William Allan Neilson, Ph.D., LL.D., as Scotch as his name; one of the most remarkable and charming personalities that ever blessed this dull earth. In addition to an irresistible, irrepressible sense of humor and delightfully twinkling eyes, his is one of the most brilliant intellects in

the country, and he is an authority on subjects Shakespearean. A quick wit, a broad and deep sympathy and an utter fearlessness of speech particularly characterize him. This fearlessness of speech and of revealing his mind and opinions has antagonized as many as it has endeared. A great mind and personality is always admired passionately and hated bitterly.

Of the Faculty as a whole, over one-fourth are men. The attitude of the students toward this fourth is interesting, and interested. A masculine Faculty—curious word, that, singular as easily as plural, and abhorred by those it designates—a comparatively young masculine Faculty finds his courses overrun with enthusiastic students. And, indeed, being created woman, why should we not find inspiration in the teachings of a man? This is a failing peculiar to any woman's college, despite the saying that at a mention of a man, Mt. Holyoke asks, "Is he religious?", Bryn Mawr, "Who is he?", Vassar, "How much has he?", and Smith, "Where is he!".

Courses are made popular by the Faculty that give them as much as by any intrinsic merit of their own. In general, the most usual major is English, seconded by history and French. A few students major in astronomy; a few more terrestrial-minded undertake the career of a lawyer. A great many dabble or dive in paint and music. Courses in the history and theory of art or music are always well filled. Perhaps literature and the light polite arts predominate over the sciences.

For almost every department from Art to Zoology there are clubs to which students of high enough standing may be elected. Besides these there are literary clubs, *Manuscript* for the even classes, *Blue Pencil* for the Odds, to which belong those girls who have a particularly literary bent. *Alpha* and *Phi Kappa Psi* are collections of heterogeneous talent. There

is the *Ancient Order of Hibernians* and *Orangemen*; there is a club for Catholics and a club for commuters. The usual Dramatics Association, jocularly the Dram. Ass., laudably attempts anything from "Monsieur Beaucaire" and "The Dark Lady of the Sonnets" to "An Ideal Husband." In fact, there is a club for almost every person in college; and these clubs, academic or more frivolous, entirely replace the sorority of most women's colleges.

The S. C. A. C. W., which comes trippingly enough to the tongue after a few weeks in Northampton, is not a club, but is the organization of religious feeling among the students, such as there is. This abbreviated society is the Smith College Association for Christian Work, open for universal membership on the payment of an admission fee. Its work consists of general supervision and welcoming of each year's Freshmen, and of social service in Northampton, reading at the Old Ladies' Home, work in playgrounds and the Children's Home, teaching classes at the People's Institute. Its Missionary Department provides for the partial support of Ginling College in Nanking, China, where two Smith graduates are now teaching. However, the modern atheistic or pantheistic tendency is as subtly obvious here as everywhere; our generation proves itself consistently a generation of doubters, skeptics, pagans.

The Athletic Association is also distinct from any clubs. It includes most of the college, and is under the direction of the Department of Hygiene and Physical Education, more informally known as the Gym. Department. It is almost a technicality, this Athletic Association; if one is not a member, one cannot belong to any team, or obtain tickets to any game held in the gymnasium, or to any of the college functions that take place there, from the "rally" and "stunts" on Rally Day to the Gymnastics Drill at the end of the year.

Membership is simply secured by the payment of a fee. The Gym. Faculty coach the students in the various sports that go on hand in hand with work in gymnastics. Of these, basketball is primary, with baseball and field hockey dangerous rivals. Cricket, volleyball and archery maintain a feeble existence; they are subject to laughter and scorn. Tennis is ardently pursued during every moment of the season. Swimming of a kind goes on in the tank, which is, alas! one of the standing jokes of the college, and overflows if more than five people are in it at a time.

Sports are held on the Allen Recreation Field. At present there are two Allen Fields, the "new" and the "old." The latter was completely outgrown, and plans were made with vigor and optimism for its transformation into a site for dormitories. It was nevertheless a shock to the girls who returned last fall and found the substantial skeletons of three new buildings occupying the place where tennis courts had been a few months before. The New Field is rapidly being regenerated from mere acres of mud to a semblance of a place for sports; eighteen tennis courts have materialized, but basketball and the rest are still confined to the remains of the Old Field.

Walking, bicycling, and rowing are stock amusements. Dancing is almost synonymous with Smith. There are Saturday night dances in the Students' Building for girls and "fussers"; dances in the boat house and the gymnasium for girls and girls; dances objective as well as subjective, for there are students who clog well enough to entertain an audience, and a regular class in esthetic dancing whose members are equally obliging and efficient. Such organizations as the Kitchen Orchestra of Clark House, one of the college dormitories, often provide the music for these dances. This Kitchen Orchestra was a most original and successful invention. The piano was dis-

guised as a stove and embellished with a tea-kettle, the wringing machine become a hurdy-gurdy, the popcorn-popper and frying-pan were transmuted to violin and guitar respectively, and the clotheshanger was a harp. The leader was appropriately dressed as chef, and the other participants were butlers and maids. The actual noise, excellent jazz, was produced by means of musical kazooes.

There are more serious-minded musical organizations; Mandolin Club, containing the usual instruments with the unusual addition of a xylophone; a college orchestra; and a double choir, half of which trains under Ivan T. Gorokhoff, formerly of the Russian Cathedral of New York, and sings Russian anthems at the Sunday afternoon Vesper service. The Glee Club and Mandolin Club ordinarily give an annual concert in combination.

Smith is poor in publications, although the atmosphere is full of literary aspiration. There is the "Monthly," a magazine of everything from poems and short stories to essays and book reviews. The "Weekly" is a newspaper that gives a résumé of each week's activities, and announces lectures and concerts to come. The "Campus Cat" is the most interesting and original; it is published "when the spirit moves," on the average of four or five times a year, and consists of a single sheet sold for the abortive sum of a nickel. It has a secret board of nine editors, revealed at the end of each year. Its contents are very colloquial, and take the form of short humorous verse, pen-and-ink sketches, and irreverent comments on college life. Typical of its Muse are the following:

Forever
A billow fell in love one day
With a little pool in a rocky cave.
He crept up over the sand and said:
O let me be your Permanent Wave!

Glee Club is the time for those who are fussing to be kittenish and for those who aren't fussing to be catty.

The Senior Year Book is an ordinary example of its kind; it furnishes a complete history, with photographs, of the graduating class each year. Press Board, including forty or fifty girls, sends out practically all the news of Smith that goes to newspapers—news of international interest, so to speak; for there are students at Smith who represent forty states in the Union, as well as China and Japan, Hawaii, Paris and Panama, Ontario, Nova Scotia, Spain and Italy, and even Scandivania.

IV

THE very interesting character and ideas—or are they identical?—of Miss Sophia Smith, our founder and benefactor, deserve at least a casual reference. She was a person of religious zeal but was at the same time essentially a modern; these incompatibles are embodied in her plans for the college. It was to be an institution of higher learning for women; it should offer educational advantages equal to those afforded in men's colleges; Biblical study and Christian religious culture should be prominent; men should have part in government and instruction as well as women. Directly contradictory to modern morals and ideas, Miss Smith gave us the motto, "To Virtue, Knowledge." In 1875 the first Freshman class materialized, fourteen strong-minded young intellectuals under the direction of L. Clark Seelye as president. It is perhaps again significant that all three presidents of Smith have been men: Smith does not foster Feminism. The present Freshman class numbers nearly six hundred. The total roll of the college is one thousand nine hundred ninety-nine.

At such a rate of growth it has been essential for the college to make continual purchases of land and to erect new buildings. The direction of expansion has been toward the grounds of the State Hospital for the

Insane, much more picturesquely labelled "Dippy Hill" by the students. In this unwillingness is typified the almost tangible hostility of the people of Northampton toward the college, an attitude as inexplicable as it is universal. It seems to exist in most towns side by side with universities or colleges or even preparatory schools. A classic instance of this is the Dartmouth-Hanover clash of several years ago, in which Hanover yielded ignominiously. The town decided to levy a poll tax on all college students. In retaliation the Dartmouth men attended the next town meeting in a body, where they outnumbered the good folk of Hanover eight to one. Brushing away resistance like cobwebs, they passed two resolutions; first, to build a boardwalk from College Hall to the front door of the Young Ladies' Seminary six miles away; second, to erect a town hall eight hundred feet long, four hundred feet high, and two feet wide. From that day to this, Dartmouth has paid no poll tax.

In time, however, Smith aims to build enough dormitories to accommodate all students, thus eliminating the aristocratic off-campus houses with their gilt-edged tendencies, where the college spirit is sadly diluted. This ambition is made doubly difficult by the fact that Smith can only limit its size by its high standard of admission. The standard thereafter seems to drop; only sixty is required for passing a subject, and "A" is considered high honor. But the success of any career in college depends on academic success. Of course there are other qualities that aid in attaining distinction. Extreme push will do it, or extreme pull; remarkable cleverness, or beauty, or talent. Neither money nor pedigree will inevitably bring a girl to the fore, for the boasted democracy of Smith actually does exist, and intrinsic merit with poise or self-confidence in back of it is almost sure to be

recognized. Without good marks, however, a girl cannot be admitted to clubs or teams, cannot hold any office, cannot obtain scholarships. Fame in any line, athletic, artistic, executive, depends on the pen that makes a "B" instead of a "D." The girl who says "My dear, I haven't cracked a book for that course; it's a perfect snap!" will never get to be president of *her* class! There are remarkable opportunities for procrastination and "bluffing," from which many receive transient benefit. Cheating is equally easy; but it has a distinctly bad odor. Such a petty vice! If one is irresistibly impelled to sin, why not sin gloriously—murder an abhorred room-mate, or elope with the charming young married professor of English? What is the virtue or value of a trick-begotten "A" on a college examination paper?

Perhaps this attitude and its connotations typify Smith, after all: good sportsmanship and loyalty among undergraduates; enthusiastic devotion among its *alumnæ*; an atmosphere that is friendly, a college and students that are enterprising and well-groomed. It is not distinctly radical nor distinctly intellectual; it is the sort of college one would expect to find in a place like Northampton and the Connecticut Valley, which are extrinsically Smith. What *alumnæ* ever thinks of the college without thinking of the New England weather, wilfully malicious, raining every other day or every other week all the year? The name "Hamp." calls up a heterogeneous store of memories: low mountains and a twisted river; the hot dog

wagon, delightfully dark in its corner behind the Court House; the little hill, surrounded by an iron fence, where glib Freshmen believe that departed presidents and professors lie buried. *Hamp.* implies the shops where Smith students squander their patrimony on books and buns; College Hall, with its chimes that are "beautiful" for two years and damned for two more; "Bobby" Withington, with his orange necktie and genius for puns, among his most famous being, "After the funeral there was a dead silence," and "Is Boileau any relation to Drinkwater?"

The predominating memory is none of these. It is not the books 'n' larnin', invaluable though they be; toward them the attitude is much that of the little boy whose father said, "Son, it's such a beautiful May day, and so lovely outdoors, don't you think it would be nice to weed Daddy's garden?" With a gleam of suspicion in his eye, Son replied, "Have I *gotta*?" It is that among two thousand girls of the same age, kindred spirits have the opportunity of a lifetime or even a reincarnation to find each other. No girl can be quite solitary in this most democratic of colleges, no matter how individual her tastes or ideas. Congenials are bound to come together; and there is nothing more divine in a very mundane world than meeting someone else who appreciates Peter Rabbit and the Rubaiyat equally. Friendship is the leaven of life; and though indeed that person who boasts more than three friends, in every sense of the word, is surpassingly wealthy, at Smith one may find those three.



A West End Tragedy

By L. M. Hussey

I

HE wore his hair rather long on top; it started low on his forehead, described a sharp wave and terminated, at one side, in a sort of immense curl. It was thick, strong hair, of an uncertain brown like the indeterminate color of old cloth, and it was always barbered in the accepted fashion of the West End. That is to say, it was clipped close to the white scalp on the sides and at the back and then, by an abrupt transition, high on the head, it grew out luxuriantly, giving the effect of a flattened skull cap.

He was a large fellow; his shoulders were heavy, his arms were thick. He carried them a little out from his body and so, dangling in semi-circles at his sides, with his great torso and his small head, he somewhat resembled an anthropoid ape.

His face was well-shaped, the features symmetrically disposed, and his full chin gave him an aggressive aspect. His blue eyes met your own with an unwavering directness, with, indeed, a stare. It was a stare neither of intelligence nor curiosity, but, mainly, self-sufficiency. It looked upon the world as with the eyes of some superior rodent, witnessing facts alone, limited realities, but entirely without timidities or fears.

He was born in the West End when that part of the city was still a kind of detached village. The city proper, the region of paved streets and respectable householders, ended abruptly in those days at Fifty-second Street. Then, as if an aridity of soil or miasm of swamp defied further extension, a stretch of weedy lots intervened, punctuated with

ash dumps and an occasional pond. Wild carrot, rag weed, and runty trees grew profusely on these lots; there the boys dug caves, conducted secret orders, and engaged in piratical adventure. Rival gangs clashed in grimy battle in this jungle of weeds and refuse, and Raymond, as a boy, belonged to the formidable West End Gang.

In the West End the city resumed itself, for no apparent reason, in a collection of dirt streets and frame houses. The streets are paved now and the wooden houses have nearly all given way to modern construction. In those days the West End came into being because of certain mills built on a wide creek just over the city line. At six in the morning the mill whistles screamed like tormented souls and from the frame houses a swarm of dingy men and women issued with a sort of ominous impetuosity, hurried over the hill, descended toward the creek, and entered the mills like a mob of condemned entering a prison. But they were not prisoners save of a harsh necessity. They were citizens, Americans, the men were voters; they had wives, they beat them or were beaten, they raised immense families like jack-rabbits, and on Saturday evenings they drank cheap beer and bad whiskey at Vincent's saloon, passing from back-slapping and jocularly to formidable rows, conducted with empty beer bottles and bung starters. It was a rough community.

The city erected a brick school in the West End, at first the only building of brick in that section. At six Raymond was put to work in the mill, where he thrust cotton waste into burlap bags larger than himself. At seven he was

released from the mill and sent to the school, by mandate of the authorities who, for the first time, began to disturb the custom of West End life.

He attended school for nine years. He acquired enough knowledge of the printed word to read the newspaper, chiefly the sporting pages and the comic strips. He studied geography for seven years and learned that an island was a body of land surrounded by water and an isthmus a neck of land uniting two continents, with a sea on either side, whereas a peninsula protruded into the waters like a finger—distinctions that he confused in later years. In American History he learned that the embattled farmers of Colonial days were uniformly brave, whereas the Britishers were poltroons, and he acquired a contempt for all foreigners. After school hours he, and other boys, used to hide up an alley and throw clods at Nick, the Neopolitan huckster, thereafter running with terror when he threatened them, sure in the conviction that, catching them, he would produce out of his trousers a monumental knife and would rip them open from belly to chin. In school hours he also studied grammar, acquired a vague knowledge of the difference between verbs and nouns, but the transitive and intransitive verbs dismayed him, and as for the conjugations, he could not manage them. He was an average West End schoolboy.

Raymond was always impatient with school, for it irked him like an incurable itch. But as the term of this compulsion drew toward its finish, his irritation with all of the classroom grew more acute; he was hugely impatient to have done with the follies of learning. He wanted to enter into the world in the manner of the older boys. He had his heroes, who were the inspiration of his peculiar dreams.

Every evening on the street corners they stood about in groups, their hands shoved down into their pockets, their cigarettes pendant from their lips. To Raymond it seemed an admirable thing to work by day at a physical task, growing strong with muscle, and then, in the

evening, to lounge at the corner with money jingling like little bells in your pockets and with opinions on your lips. These young men all had their opinions; they were sapient of baseball players, prize fighters and barrooms; they knew the rendezvous of the fancy girls.

He visioned a precise picture of his approaching life, once out of scholastic bondage. First he would seek a job. A job was a necessity and as intimate a part of life as wearing clothes or taking food. He never dreamed of growing rich, of finding a day-long pleased ease, for he was not able to dream a life unknown in the West End. He saw himself going out to work every day of his life, even after he was an old man; the prospect did not daunt him. With money to spend, he could come to a first-hand knowledge of the boxers who cuffed each other every Monday night at the old Olympia; he could drink beer and smoke a score of cigarettes a day; he could bellow his opinions on the street corner and fight for them, with bare fists, when necessary. Furthermore, he could have a girl.

To have a girl was a gaudy prospect. He did not yearn amorously for encircling arms, nor think of willing lips raised for a kiss, for these allures had not yet enticed him. What beguiled him was an external glamor, the sunlit Sunday afternoon, the girl on your arm, the pride of possession, the jeering envy of the girlless ones, the showy best clothes worn for the occasion, a ride in the park, a visit to the amusements and the girl clinging with little shrieks to your superior strength as you hurtled down the steepest glide of the scenic railway! Afterward one could talk knowingly of women; it was the thing.

II

IN the end Raymond accomplished his liberation and, after a few weeks, found his job. He did not enter one of the mills, for his early experience with the burlap bags had given him a dislike to mill work. He found his occupation in town, working with an electrician.

He was taught to splice wire, to make

connections, to charge batteries, to assemble switches and bolt buss-bars to their boards; in short, he set about to learn the trade. His employer was a huge, red-faced man, as muscular as a wrestler and stuffed like a sausage with profanities. He bawled blasphemies like an obscene prophet propounding the creed of some execrable cult; his name was Mahoney.

Three days after Raymond's employment Mahoney fell into an altercation with a plasterer; it concerned their mutual procedure in a building operation. They argued briefly, yet vociferously, then resorted to blows, whereat Mahoney revealed his superior dexterity and gained Raymond's profound respect. His great, knobby fist upset the plasterer like a stricken ten-pin, battered his nose, knocked out a tooth and thus clinched the argument. The boy was vastly impressed. What a wallop, he remarked to himself.

At home and on the corner he related this incident many times, he embroidered it with expletives, and gave it illustration by sudden jabs into the air with his large fist. He continued to admire Mahoney, his admiration finding weekly increase. But, as he worked at his job with the red-faced man, a variety of unrest stirred in him, like the premonitory signs of an illness.

It surprised him to discover that he was not wholly content. Now, at last, he had the right of opinions, there was money in his pockets, and he tried the beer of numerous bars. By a bound he had graduated into the life of his fancy but like a stolen fruit found sour it did not suffice him.

Indeed, without comprehending the fact, the source of his unrest dwelt in his admiration for the man Mahoney. This fellow was gorgeous before his eyes, outvying the semigods of the West End as a mountain overtops a valley.

With a deep yearning Raymond desired to emulate this life; it was spacious! Mahoney was bigger than other men; when he worked he worked faster, when he fought he fought harder, when he drank he drank deeper. Some-

times he talked to Raymond of women and the young man perceived him as the contemptuous conquerer of a thousand girls; he made love to them all and cared for none of them. His circumference of activity widened beyond the West End as a star measures farther than the moon.

Sometimes a quality of envy adulterated his admiration like a drop of bitter essence in a sweet and deliriant beverage. He was oppressed by a sense of inferiority; he did not like to feel inferior. Often in the evening, behind the closed door of his room, divested of his clothes and nude as an eel, he intently watched the disclosure of his mirror, tensing his biceps, raising his scapulae, contracting every muscle of his big body. The bunched muscles entranced him—he was strong. Nevertheless, Mahoney was stronger.

Within his limitations he imitated this protagonist. He learned to drink whiskey and returned home late at night, through the emptied streets, singing bawdy songs in a thick voice. Becoming a fighting man, he provoked quarrels for the sake of using his fists. Occasionally, when he was drunk, the idea came to him that he might some time fight Mahoney. A kind of impassioned giddiness came to him then.

His first experience with the girls occurred one evening in company with two of his friends of the West End. They had wandered down to the creek beyond the mills and were ascending the little road that leads into Fernwood. Lombardy poplars fenced the road like sentinels motionless at the posts of an interminable watch, while the fields stretched away on either hand, purple in the night, and noisy—like a disorderly orchestra—with crickets. The three young men of the West End walked in the shadow and as each inhaled the smoke of his cigarette the outline of a face glowed momentarily in the dusk. One of them began to sing a song; another joined nasally in a harmony of consecutive thirds.

Then, as they approached the old cemetery that borders the Pike, they per-

ceived three girls seated on an embankment who stood out in the darkness as three white shapes against the black and purple grass. The vocal members ceased their song.

There was a quick whisper.

"Let's pick 'em up!"

Raymond's companions were older than himself and therefore larger in experience. He had never deliberately talked to a strange girl and now he approached the adventure, not with trepidation, but with a definite excitement, a faster beating of his heart, a swifter urge of his warm blood. He thought suddenly of Mahoney. Mahoney would have taken the three of them!

His companions clambered up the little embankment and Raymond followed behind them. They at once suggested amusements to the girls.

"We'll take a walk. . . ."

The girls refused.

"Well then, let's ride out to Woodside. It's early yet. We'll hire a boat and row around the lake."

They declined.

Raymond had not spoken but in the dusk, with distended pupils, he was watching the girl that remained to him. She too remained silent, holding her face somewhat downcast so that he saw only the shadow of her lips and the curved fringe of her eyelashes. Her hair, it seemed, was dark, although the dusk absorbed all lighter colors; and she was small.

"Gosh," he said, slowly, "now that we've met each other, you're not going to be cranky like your friends, are you? Come on, let's us take a walk!"

"I can't!"

"Sure you can! Why not?"

"You don't know everything. I've got to be home."

"Well then, let me walk home with you?"

"No, I mustn't."

He pleaded; she compromised a little.

"I'll let you walk with me to the Pike."

He took her arm and they proceeded along the swarthy road. Raymond had no words to say and he was troubled. He was troubled for the correct ap-

proach, the proper policy. He wished to remark some comic word, to make the girl laugh and finally to kiss her. Her body transpired a potent scent, she seemed saturated in perfumes that dissolved in the air around her, moved with her as she walked, became the immaterial person of her allure, and filled the young man's nostrils with every taken breath. He was made acutely aware of this pleasure, the pleasure of a girl's presence. What would Mahoney do in these circumstances? A sharp anger exasperated him at the sudden thought of Mahoney's superior knowledge.

They reached the Pike; she withdrew her arm.

"Good night. . . ." she said.

He watched her disappear. Then he advanced a step, as if to run after her. What a folly! He had forgotten the first necessities, for he had made no other engagement, did not know her name and was ignorant of her home.

"You poor nut," he said to himself.

There was a sound of footsteps approaching up the road. The others would soon join him. He could feel his cheeks grow warm as his shame flushed them with hot blood. He was alone, the girl was gone; how could he explain it? He felt a dread of the older boys' sarcastic jeers and with an abrupt turn he descended the Pike by the long cemetery wall.

The Pike dipped down toward the city limits and his large body, obscure in the night, projected itself along this declivity with the effect of a slowly moving meteor, massive of bulk, descending upon the earth. He crossed the old iron bridge spanning the mill creek and it resounded like a huge drum under his beating footsteps. To the north the clustered lights of the West End gleamed out of the night; he avoided them.

He came to the trolley limits and boarded a waiting car. Riding down he left the car and walked through the streets with an unappeasable restlessness. The sight of the girls tormented him; fair or dark, large or small, he wanted any one of them. Every girl

was accompanied, and his muscles tensed with his hate of their companions.

He reached Vine Street and here the complexion of the crowd was changed. Sailors walked up and down the street in pairs and groups; unattended girls paused here and there in the light of a shop window and turned their carmined profiles to the street. A little man in an enormous coat, huddled like a marasmatic child in huge swathings, passed with staring eyes, oblivious to everything. With an orchestration of brief oaths a sot was ejected from a corner bar, tumbling out like the clown of a burlesque show; Raymond shoved him from his path. A girl with a great curling feather in her hat had just smiled at him; he had not returned the smile, yet he regretted this omission.

He turned into a little street. Someone behind a window tapped on the glass and he stopped, faced the window and stared at the darkened pane. There were lights in the upper stories. He stared, fumbling with the money in his pocket. Then, with his head lowered, with a sort of slow, bull-like charge, he mounted the worn steps and went in through the unlocked door.

III

WITH certain embroideries and certain omissions and with a proper bravado Raymond related his adventure to Mahoney. Mahoney, a pair of wire-cutters held like a toy in his prodigious fist, listened with a sort of deprecating grin. He made no comment.

"Last Saturday," he said, "Wholley and me went down to Barnegat and put on a hell of a party. There was nine quarts of liquor and by five o'clock we was stewed to the gills. Then the girls. . . ."

He proceeded with the recital. His cheeks puffed out, his face reddened like a torch, he spat tobacco juice through his teeth. Hearing the story of Mahoney's colossal debauch, Raymond felt a shame of his own adventure. Silence would have been better; he should not have told it. A degree of improb-

ability came into Mahoney's tale and out of his envy the young man doubted his veracity.

"Mahoney, you're a liar," he muttered under his breath. Why not deny the man to his face, openly? He wanted the courage.

With the progress of time Raymond was growing dissatisfied with his life, a dissatisfaction for which he had no words. Nevertheless, his inarticulate want plagued him incessantly, made him morose, deprived him of joy in his accustomed pleasures. The West End corner no longer sufficed him, the West End itself had grown small. He ceased to visit Vincent's; he claimed the beer was poor.

In the evenings he acquired the habit of going downtown. He got drunk in waterfront barrooms and engaged in savage fights with the longshoremen. When he fought, his young strength was possessed with a demon, he whirled his arms like a windmill, leaped into the air, grimaced like a fiend, and prevailed by a wild aggression. Arrested one night in one of these brawls, he was taken before the night-court, sullen and afraid. But Mahoney appeared, winked at the magistrate, and Raymond was released.

Sometimes he wandered through the theatre district, watching the well-dressed crowds as they emerged from their places of entertainment. The men looked puny; their clothes disgusted him, the white hands, poising cigarettes, enraged him. Although he held no dislike for his work, he hated them for their ease, but found himself superior; a cold self-sufficiency looked out in his stare. Yet their women were gorgeous!

He watched these women with avid eyes. They were another race and each contained in herself the mystery of the unknown. They wore no hats, their hair was coiled in fabulous abundance, their faces were small, their throats were slim, and the tips of their arched slippers seemed hardly to touch the pavement. A deep satisfaction stirred him with the thought that even Mahoney knew no one of these!

For months his mood remained con-

stantly deprecating. At the prize fights he minimized the fighters, found no further glories in a name, and compared himself with the boxers. Probably, with a little training, he could defeat the best of them.

Every week he visited the burlesque show at the Casino and here, during intervals, his sour humors were sweetened by the grotesque antics of the comic actors. He roared an enormous laugh when Sambino, the nigger porter, siphoned the beer out of the Duke's stein by means of a rubber hose. But the show girls plagued him with their flaunting charms. The red lips, the rhythmic legs, the twirling bodies made him giddy, and whereas he was remote from the pale and splendid women whom he watched on the street, these girls were close to his own kind, and he aspired to them. Their life of the theatre engauled them with allure; how could he meet such girls?

One evening, after the show, he crossed the street to drink a bottle of beer in Cooke's, opposite the burlesque house. The bar was crowded, and entering the café, he sat down at an empty table. Then at the next table he perceived an unattended girl, sipping a violet hued drink out of a tiny, conical glass.

The curious beverage and the person of the girl reminded him suddenly of the stage girls who had lately engrossed him. Perhaps she was one of them; he stared at her fixedly.

Her wide-brimmed hat shadowed the half of her face while the other half stood out with a singular boldness. As she sipped the violet liquid, a drop at a time, her magenta lips seemed hardly to part. Her eyes, penciled black on the lashes, were downcast, her face was immobile. A sable band of glistening hair descended from under her hat and enclosed her ear; the tip, like a bud, projected.

Raymond watched her for a time and no one came near her. His desire emboldened him and pushing back his chair abruptly, he crossed the space of the narrow aisle and sat down at her table. She raised her face and her eyes re-

viewed him in a swiftly descending glance as if he were an antagonist whom she must instantly appraise. Her lip curled a little.

"Who told you to butt in?" she inquired.

"Don't get sore," he replied. "We was both alone so I came over to ask you to have a drink with me."

The girl examined Raymond's face more carefully. Her scrutiny was reassuring, for her mouth relaxed a little although she did not smile. The young man beckoned to a waiter.

"What do you want?" he asked her.

Without speaking, she pointed to her glass.

"Two of the same," instructed Raymond.

The drinks were served. The girl propped her face in her hands, her elbows resting on the white cloth.

"I've got to talk to someone," she said. "I've got to tell somebody!"

The immobility of her body remained, but her face grew animate with varied expressions; she compressed her lips with determination, she turned them dolefully at the corners; her eyes narrowed with anger, widened with surprise, and drooped to express despair. Raymond listened in astonishment.

She was, as Raymond had half-suspected, a show girl. The original show had done well in New York, but the road company encountered difficulties from the beginning. Bad management, accidents, retirements and poor houses resulted in the show being closed two days before.

"Hell!" the girl cried, with sudden vehemence, "that wouldn't have worried me. But that bum, Dolly Carter. . . ."

Dolly, her roommate, had disappeared that morning with everything removable.

"She left me one rotten dollar in my pocketbook," the girl concluded.

Raymond was deeply sympathetic. This little show girl had her natural glamor, it was in itself an adventure to meet her, and now he shared vicariously in her own astounding adventure. She had related her misfortunes in his own idiom, phrases of peculiar appeal. His

slow imagination visioned forth her predicament and its consequential events. She was without money and without friends; his sentimentalities were strongly moved. And she was pretty, she was young.

He talked with her for more than an hour, questioning her about the show life and following her recital almost childlike and agape. Then, in the end, Raymond bluntly offered her a sum of money; he opened his big fist with a sort of generous brutality and a little roll of dirty bills rolled out like crumpled leaves on the tablecloth.

"Listen, Elaine," he said, "this is a loan. You go ahead and take it."

Later, parted from the girl, he sat in the street car and wondered whether he had been victimized by a lying tale. Indeed, he had not acted according to the West End code, for he should have displayed a suspicious sophistication and for money he should have received due value. For a moment, believing himself tricked, he writhed in the narrow seat, compressing his hands, entwining his feet, his precious sagacity, his knowledge of the world, was a stake and there is no philosophy in the West End that can countervail such humiliation of self-esteem. Nevertheless, he could not be sure!

She had promised to stay in the city another day, to meet him the following evening. If Raymond found her, according to promise, at the place of appointment, then he was justified. Meanwhile, he must say nothing to Mahoney, although he longed to talk of this show girl with a great, loud bragging.

In the end Raymond had his opportunity of bluster. The girl kept her word; her story was true. She remained more than one day, for Raymond demanded it; he was possessed with an insatiable enthusiasm. He remembered every other girl he had known and he remembered them all with a full contempt. Elaine's low swathing bands of swarthy hair, her dusky eyes and penciled lids, her lips redder by art than blood, her slim throat and her small body, the cat-like caressing quickness of

her hands made her surpassing. He was vastly, foolishly, madly proud of her. At her side, walking the street, he swaggered like a pirate. He seemed to grow bigger, the hugeness of his frame increased, his muscles swelled. He puffed out his chest, he drew his breath in lung-filling inspirations.

With Mahoney he expanded like a blatant flower, a tropical efflorescence, and felt no longer any inferiority. He dinned Elaine, the show girl, into Mahoney's ears with the persistence of a tireless mechanism, a phonographic machine, wound up to play and repeat interminably a single record. Mahoney grew disgusted; even his aplomb was disturbed.

"That reminds me," he would begin, "of a dame I—"

"She's got the real class!" interrupted Raymond. "She's got them *all* faded."

Meanwhile a new way of life, a new aspect of living revealed itself to the young man as if a magical and distorting mist had lifted from the West End and shown it new, in unique habiliments. The corner was dead, Vincent's was forgotten, but the quiet streets acquired an endless fascination. He walked them early in the evening, looking up at the lighted windows. He imagined a home of his own, with the window alight and Elaine, like a held and captured splendor, within. Never before had homes engaged the slow processes of his imagination but now they grew fabulous. He looked at newly married men, young men with young wives, as if they were creatures of another physical compound. Finally he asked the girl to marry him.

At the time they were seated in a row-boat at Woodside, the oars were withdrawn from the water and the clumsy boat drifted slow and headless, like a derelict over the black water. With his proposal the girl raised her face and although her eyes rested upon him they seemed to penetrate beyond the immediacy of his presence. He could not see them, save as chatoyant circles in the dusk. A calculating and at the same time remembering gleam came into them; she computed the possible future

and she audited the past. After a moment she decided for the easiest security, and she held out her hands, assenting, to Raymond.

The next morning he slapped Mahoney boldly on the back.

"I'm going to be married!" he said.

Mahoney's eyes stared at him out of his red face.

"You're a damn fool," he said.

IV

MAHONEY never met Elaine until after the marriage. Then, established in his own house in the West End, feeling himself secure, Raymond invited him out to supper. He had long wished to exhibit his pride. When he introduced Mahoney to his wife he performed the ceremony with a sort of blustering unction as if he were snobbishly presenting a royalty.

Mahoney revealed his talents. He told several jokes, just on the proper border of decency, he sang songs with the automatic piano, he did a disappearing coin trick and he related some of his adventures. Raymond found himself diminished. He watched Mahoney talking, jumping up, gesticulating, and something of his old envy, the sense of inferior competency, embittered his spirits. Elaine was gay, she laughed in little screams; she too sang songs; she executed a writhing dance. For a moment Raymond was resentful.

Then the full knowledge of his possession placated him. It was plain that Mahoney, the authority, approved this girl. And she was Raymond's! She was called by his name, she was dependent upon his provision and, in short, he owned her, a property like his money and his clothes. A superior and satisfied smile spread over his face.

When Mahoney was gone Elaine said:

"He's some boy. He's seen something, Ray! Gee, I had a good time this evening. Let's have some parties from now on. I don't want to dry up like a herring."

In a few months Raymond separated from Mahoney, setting up a shop for

himself, but his old employer continued to come out to the house. Raymond had discovered a disconcerting liveliness in Elaine that required satisfaction. She liked to pound out lively songs at the piano, and to sing them; her shrill voice made continual glissandos from the top notes to the lower somewhat like a cater-wauling. She was fond of dancing; she swayed her hips in syncopated rhythms, she raised her shoulders, she kicked her feet. In these amusements Raymond was slow and inept; he disliked them.

Yet he gratified Elaine's wishes for fear of losing her. Sensing that the glamor of her former life still remained with her, he was afraid to cage her. When they quarreled, she dismayed him utterly with a repeated threat.

"Listen, boy," she would say. "I'm not afraid of my meal ticket. I can go back and draw my little weekly envelope on the big time any day!"

He struggled to give her many things. He worked more than the customary hours in order to fulfill her wants. These needs astonished him. Hats accumulated in her closet, wreathed, feathered, ribboned and flowered like the sumptuous debris of some astounding garden. He was initiate of strange inner garments, hitherto undreamed; silk nothings engauded with narrow ribbons, laces like the papers in candy boxes, multiplied simplicities in crepe fabric, suspended by slim straps. These were expensive.

But he lacked the courage to quarrel over costs.

Toward the end of the year he grew dyspeptic from indifferent cooking; a lump of heavy metal lay weighty in his stomach. He acquired the habit of visiting his old home in the early evening, in order to eat an adequate stew at his mother's table.

A kind of dull dissatisfaction troubled him. He had never dreamed with precision, he had not foreseen his future clearly, yet something was vaguely unfulfilled, there was a wanting.

Meanwhile, he began to resent the presence of Mahoney and Mahoney's friends in his home. All his old envy

was returned. Sometimes he glared at the man with the dull ferocity of a caged animal. The man's loud bravado enraged him as if each gaudy adventure of Mahoney's life were, by some obscure connection, a personal affront. He remembered all his old emotions when Mahoney faced him in the shop, his big muscles bulging, his red cheeks blown out with bragging words. He hated that swaggering mouth, he longed to silence it with his fist. Above all, he was exasperated by Elaine's response to the man.

Suspicious, like wormwood instillations, possessed him. He watched his wife, he watched Mahoney; they danced together, laughed in company, but he could discover nothing further. The fact that nothing was revealed confirmed his doubts and his imagination invested his rival with a diabolic ingenuity, a capacity of successful intrigue that defied discovery.

He set a score of well-considered traps to catch his wife. He left his work at odd hours and followed her on the street, through the crowds, into stores, hiding behind convenient pillars as she made her purchases, trailing behind her when she emerged. She spent his money but she met no men; Mahoney was never seen; he unearthed nothing. The failure maddened him.

Then, one evening, his endurance was overreached. He was seated in the little parlor, the phonograph repeated a dance, and Mahoney moved about the room with Elaine in his arms. The record ceased, the partners separated and Mahoney, smiling, walked over to Raymond and slapped him heartily on the back.

"What's the matter with you, kid!" he exclaimed. "Get up and do something!"

Raymond arose. His face was lividly bloodless while head was lowered like a bull of the arena about to charge. His fists were clenched at his sides; the knuckles were white.

"You low skunk!" he cried.

Mahoney, in his amazement, could not ward the blow. Raymond's fist staggered him and he dropped back against

the table, which toppled, crashing, with his weight. The young man was upon him, but Mahoney, like a great cat, made a surprising recovery. He dodged the next blow and countered with a jab which pressed Raymond directly over the heart. He did not feel the blow.

Elaine screamed, grasped her husband's arm and he shook her off like a leaf. He battled madly, insanely, all his suspicions, his concealed rage, his years' long envy suffusing his blood like a molten metal. At last it was the moment of trial; he matched his strength!

Yet Mahoney was too strong and his great fists crashed like enormous hammers. Raymond staggered back, still fighting but an intense and unbearable bitterness had replaced his initial frenzy. The truth of this man's superior strength was born in upon him like a devastating revelation. He must not admit it!

Strangling, frenzied, he turned for an instant, lifted a chair and swung it down over Mahoney's stooping shoulders. The man crumpled, but did not collapse. Raymond swung again, he swung repeatedly, he beat Mahoney as he lay motionless upon the floor. The chair splintered and only a fragment remained in Raymond's hands.

Then he straightened his body and the bit of chair-back dropped out of his relaxed fist. Mahoney lay inert like a tumbled sack and he did not breathe. Elaine had disappeared.

V

THERE was not a sound in the room, in the house, on the street. In this silence Raymond stared down at his victim, at first with a start of fear. But in the same second his fear was overwhelmed by a brutal exultation that surged up through his body in burning waves. Suddenly he beat with his fists on his expanded chest, evoking a resounding note like the voice of a deep drum. He felt himself hard, he was harder than forged steel; no man in the world could stand before him! Where was Mahoney, where was his blabbing

mouth, his bullying strength? Raymond almost laughed aloud with a mad delight.

Then he grew cunning. He turned abruptly, silently, like a cat that hears a noise. The room was unchanged. He thought of Elaine; where had she gone? His great shoulders shrugged with a bear-like heaviness. It did not matter and he would not stop to look after her for now he was done with her; he saw that plainly. He must leave at once, get out of the house, and escape from the city by the first chance.

Yet, when he looked down once more at the still figure of Mahoney his mad exulting returned and held him to the spot as by a dangerous spell. Something spoke within him, insistently, passionately urging. "You damn fool," it said. "You damn fool! Get out of here! Get out of here, you damn fool!" Nevertheless, he remained, and once he prodded the body with the toe of his shoe.

There was a step on the porch; Raymond whirled around. The door was flung open. He caught a glimpse of Elaine, her eyes enormous. In front of her two policemen came, running. He heard them yell some command but the words were lost in the noise of his blood beating tremendously at his

temples. Then he charged these invaders like a blinded bull, his jaw set, his first pounding. He felt the blow of a stick striking him across the head with a nauseating force, the light left his eyes, and yet he flung himself forward. He fell down the steps, picked himself up and began to run along the street.

Three explosions sounded behind him. Raymond stopped. There was some barrier to his escape, some terrible, unseen restraint. He moved his hands about with the vague motions of a blind man feeling for his way. Suddenly he collapsed, falling to the pavement.

He felt someone lifting him, but he saw no face, no sustaining arm. He had forgotten Mahoney and there was a troubled regret in his mind. Something had gone wrong with him and he had strayed far, into a bad dream. He wanted the old days again and he was sad with wanting them—the West End, the old days, the corner at night, Vincent's and the beer, money in his pocket and opinions on his lips. . . . the girls . . . yes, even Mahoney. . . .

The other policeman stooped over his companion.

"He's done," said the first. "You got him neat, McCurdy. Right in the middle of the back!"



A WOMAN has two ways of letting you know she is ready to fall in love: by telling you either of the cruelty or kindness of her husband.



A MAN flatters himself on a quick conquest, little realizing that he owes his success largely to his predecessor.



A CHARMING woman is one who says little but leaves one wondering.



Americana

By Milnes Levick

I

The Frontier

EXTRACT from the autobiographical letter of a Pacific Coast pioneer:

"There were about the usual shooting scrapes incident to all new mining camps but justice was dealt out by the miners' courts and the offender hanged in a stately and decorous way, at which everybody turned out to see that it was properly done. . . . I do not remember of any lynchings."

II

Art

REMARKS of the Hon. Charles H. Sloan, alumnus of the Iowa State Agricultural College and representative from the Fourth Nebraska District, ending a debate in the House of Representatives on a bill for the incorporation of the Academy of Arts and Letters:

"I desire to ask if anyone has discovered why Walt Mason, the most widely read and the most generally read and the best paid poet on the western continent, a citizen of Nebraska, loaned temporarily to Kansas, is not mentioned on that list."

III

Music

FROM the remarks of William P. Dold at the annual banquet of the Wholesale Grocers' Board of Trade:

" . . . So this friend of mine insisted that I go along, and I want to tell you, gentlemen, that afterwards I was glad I saw my way clear to do it.

Culture is very important. None of us here would say no to that. But this was something bigger. Those men brought home to me a great lesson, even if they were fiddlers. There were four of them, sitting on the little stage, each with a fiddle, a big fiddle or a little one. You'd have said each one would just go his own way, for they never looked at one another. But they worked like clock-work. The man with the big bull fiddle never had to tell them when to go loud and when to go soft. And that, gentlemen, was a revelation to me. It taught a great lesson. What was that lesson? Let me tell you: it was the lesson of *Team Work!*"

IV

Diet

AN advertisement:
"Food Shot from Guns!"

V

Grief

A LETTER from a heart bowed down in Cincinnati:

"September 16, 1922.

"MR. H. E. HOCKS,
Blank Life Insurance Co.,
City.

Dear Sir:

"This is to acknowledge receipt of the payment on a policy which my father, Mr. Henry T. Cranford, held with your Company.

"It might interest you to know that my father held policies in about eight different insurance companies and in spite of the fact that all of the proofs of death were mailed at the same time to the home offices, your company was the first to remit. It might interest you to know that they were mailed on a Friday afternoon and that the envelope containing the check bears the postmark of the hour of

2:00 p.m. Saturday, the next day, and on the same day which they received the proof.

"I consider this exceptionally good service and wish to thank you for your help in filing the proof of death.

"Yours very truly,
"JTC/M JOHN T. CRANFORD."

VI

Policing

FROM "American Police Systems," by Raymond B. Fosdick:

"'I am always between two fires,' the chief of police in New Orleans told me. 'If I should enforce the law against selling tobacco on Sunday, I would be run out of office in twenty-four hours. But I am in constant danger of being run out of office because I don't enforce it.' At the time of my visit to New Orleans the enforcement of this particular law was in a state of compromise by which green curtains were hung to conceal the tobacco stands on Sunday. The curtains served the double purpose of advertising the location of the stands and of protecting the virtue of the citizens from visions of evil. . . .

"In New Orleans at the time of my visit a policeman was stationed every evening in each of the fourteen cabarets where liquor was sold. These officers were on duty from 8 p. m. to 4 a. m., except on Saturday nights, when they were withdrawn at midnight for the reason, as stated to me by the commissioner, that their presence in the cabarets after midnight 'might seem to countenance the violation of the Sunday liquor law.' "

VII

Citizenship

FROM "Statements of Candidates," issued by the Board of Election Commissioners, prior to a general municipal election, in pursuance to chapter 2, article xi, of the charter of the City and County of San Francisco. The statement is that of Fred J. Schmidt, a candidate for the Board of Supervisors:

"I have lived in San Francisco for

the past 35 years. I am now 51 years of age. I married one of California's native daughters and I am the proud father of four children—three boys and one girl—Herbert C., Fred J., Theodore and Stella. Herbert is now a student at St. Ignatius' College, in the study of law. Fred J. is now apprentice-machinist, carrying his union card. Theodore is now in the employ of Langley & Michaels Drug Company, and Stella is a pupil at the Convent of Notre Dame. I have been engaged in the retail grocery business for over twenty years and in the real estate and collection business during the past fifteen years. I favor better streets and improved school conditions and a businesslike and economical administration of the city's affairs. I strongly favor industrial peace, and to encourage any and all new enterprises, especially manufactures. . . . I favor the lowest possible tax rate, and with proper economy this can be accomplished for the taxpayers. I favor . . . and I believe in a square deal for all without fear or favor. And if elected I will enter office without pledges and with a sincere desire to help the city where I have spent the best part of my life and give to the Board of Supervisors my 35 years of business experience for its benefit."

VIII

Religion

OVERHEARD in passing a bowered cottage:

"Damn you, Tommy, you little son of a sea cook; here I am hurrying for the revival and trying to be devout and everything and you worrying the life out of me with your tricks. Oh, you'll come to a bad end with that temper of yours. You'd drive God Almighty to drink!"

IX

Weltpolitik

A PRESS dispatch of 1918, at a mo-

ment when negotiations were thought possible:

“Worcester, Mass., October 11—
Worcester is to join in the movement
to say no to the Kaiser tomorrow.

Under the plans arranged here, all the
fire alarm bells and whistles will sound
‘999’ at one o’clock, which will be the
signal for the people to face to the east
and shout ‘No!’ ”



Chains

By Theodosia Garrison

I WAS a vagrant in the night,
Outside of love, outside of law,
Once crouched beneath a window’s light
I looked and saw

The hearth-flame and the candle-flame,
The little feast no guest might share,
And watched the two who laughing came
To share it there.

And all they had I knew one day,
Who watched them from my rags and stains,
And all they had I cast away,
As freed men chains—

Outside of law, outside of love,
I watched the two in both secure,
As prisoners are certain of
Strong walls and sure.

I saw—and turned from warmth and light.
And wondered how they might condemn
A vagrant buffeting the night
Who pitied them.



WOMEN cease to be interesting when they become supremely happy or
supremely unhappy.



A Judgment

By John Torcross

SHE told me that she adored the legendary literature of Iceland, that she was fascinated by the sagas of Scandinavia and the countless anecdotes with which they were interwoven, so I proceeded to launch forth into a voluminous discourse upon the history of those peoples. When I had finished, I turned to her.

"Tell me," I queried, "what are your actual impressions of the Norse races?"

"Why," she replied, "I think they were cute."



Trans-Atlantic

By A. Newberry Choyce

SOME of my dreams which I had counted dead
Have lain indeed out in the daytime, cold,
But in the night have snuggled to my bed
Like white and straggling lambs that come to fold.

But one there was whose little wayward heart
Stopped beating till the end, one buried deep
And coffined in a callous hour apart,
One shepherded no more even by sleep.

He died with me who could not live with you. . . .
But some day when the jonquils are in bloom,
Clear-voiced they'll call you on the Avenue
And chink their golden hands to gain your room.

How puny then shall these cold barriers be,
Stifled insistence and a week of sea!



Hattie

By Thyra Samter Winslow

I

UNTIL Ella was ten years old, all of the servant girls her family had had seemed indefinitely alike to her. There had been Rose and Ida and Mary and Pearl. She could remember that many distinctly. There were others, even farther back, whom she could remember little things about. When one is an only child, in an almost childless neighborhood, servant girls are rather important.

Ella's family was Father and Mother. Father left while Ella was at breakfast. She came into the dining-room—now that she bathed and dressed herself—while Father and Mother were eating. You are supposed to say "Good morning Father, Good morning Mother," very brightly, when you come into the dining-room for breakfast or when you see your parents for the first time in the day, any place, for that matter. That seemed silly to Ella. Why be so particular about "Good morning" and then not especially attentive the rest of the day? Sometimes she forgot "Good morning" and then Mother was sure to say—if Father didn't, "Has the cat got your tongue this morning, daughter?" When Ella was younger she would stick out her tongue to show that the cat didn't have it. She knew better than that, now. She would say "Good morning," now, even if she didn't care whether Father or Mother had a particularly good morning.

Ella would sit down at her place, which was across from no one at all, but across from where Grandma or Aunt Sophie sat when they were there

visiting. Ella loved Grandma but she hated Aunt Sophie, who snored. The servant girl would bring in her fruit and her oatmeal—which meant that you had to eat the oatmeal first or it would be cold by the time the fruit was finished. Ella said "Good morning," to the servant girl, who muttered "Good morning, Miss Ella," not seeming to like saying it any better than Ella did.

Then Papa got up and wiped his mouth with his napkin after he got to his feet and threw the napkin on the table. Ella had to fold her napkin and put it in a ring which Grandma had given her once when she was so little she didn't remember it, for Christmas. Mother or the servant girl folded Father's napkin for him after he was gone. Father said, "Good-bye Mother, Good-bye Ella," and Mother followed him out to the front door where they always had grown-up things to whisper about. Then Dave drove Father to his office. Dave was the colored man who drove the car and took care of the yard. He slept over the garage and ate, all alone, in the kitchen. The servant girl, who was always white—Father and Mother liked white servant girls—ate in the dining-room after the family had finished. She ate all alone, too.

Ella didn't see Father again until noon. If it were school time, Mother helped Ella tie the ribbon on her hair, after breakfast, and saw that she finished dressing for school and went to the door with her, too, when she went away and said, "Be a good girl, Ella, and be careful when you cross High Street." Ella took lunch, in a box—nicer lunch than most of the girls, even

the girls in the crowd, because Mother made the servant girl cut the crusts off the sandwiches.

Then Ella didn't see Father until dinner time. Nor Mother, either, usually. Mother played Bridge and Five Hundred or visited with ladies in the afternoons and she was usually doing one of those when Ella came home from school. That's why servant girls were important. The servant girl gave you a cooky or an apple or a piece of bread-and-butter-and-sugar. If it was rainy and you couldn't play out, you tried to talk with her, when she was the kind you could talk to.

Ella ate dinner with the family, now that she was ten. Until last year, she had eaten earlier, all alone, and gone to bed while it was still light. Now, she could play outside, even after dinner, while it was warm. In the evening, when Mother and Father went out, which was usually, Ella was home with the servant girl. That's why the servant girl was important, too. Vacations, of course, Ella was home all day, or at least she played around near home all day. Now it was vacation and Ella was ten.

II

Now Hattie was the servant girl. Ella liked Hattie best of all the servant girls she could remember. Some families called their servant girls "the maid" or "the cook." Ella's family said, "the girl," though Ella supposed it meant about the same thing.

The girl slept in the room above the kitchen. It was a little room with only one window. There was a little iron bed in it, narrower than Ella's but longer, and the dresser that had been in Grandama's-or-Aunt-Sophie's room until Granda broke the mirror of it. There were two chairs but you had to be careful how you sat in one of them or it slipped all down.

All of the girls had had this room and it had always looked alike until Hattie came. She always had a white towel on the dresser, like in Mother's room, and a mirror and a comb and

brush, too, and a pincushion with a little Chinaman doll's head on it. Oh, all the girls had been all right, of course—not like some she had heard about who pinched you and said they would beat you if you told on them. Rose was forever saying things that weren't so and making Mother believe them and Ida was cross about unbuttoning you and about combing snarls out of your hair and saying things about "A big girl ought to do things for herself," though you weren't such a big girl at that time. Mary had sort of unpleasant ways, too, and would pretend there weren't things to eat when you came from school and would pretend to be good to you when Mother was there. Pearl was so stupid and kept her mouth open and said "Huh?" when you asked for anything. Pearl was a Swede.

The others were German girls. Mother always told the ladies that came in, afternoons, that German girls were the best when you could get them. Ella didn't think Hattie was anything at all. She had never heard anything like that about Hattie mentioned.

There was some mystery about Hattie, though that wasn't why Ella liked her. In the morning, when you said, "Good morning, Hattie," Hattie would say. "Top o' the marning to ye," though she wasn't Irish and that's what Irish people say, in a song, or "Good morning, Miss Morning Glory." That started things nice, sort of. In school time, Hattie would put something extra in your lunch, that Mother didn't know anything about that you were just as well off not mentioning to her, a piece of taffy or a chocolate cream or a few salted almonds, even. These were surprises and were tucked into one corner, in a piece of tissue paper.

After school, and in vacation, now, Hattie would talk to Ella on rainy days or when the boys played rough games that girls couldn't keep up with. The only girls in the neighborhood were Susie Babbitt and Hortense Robinson and they were over a year younger than Ella and didn't like to do anything but sew doll dresses.

Hattie talked fine, the way Ella liked to talk, as if she were grown-up and her ideas were worth listening to. One day they talked about snow and not a week later Hattie brought home a book for Ella with pictures in it, and one picture was a big snowflake all enlarged, thousands of times, like a big mechanical drawing, only more beautiful. Hattie talked about life, too, and about doing good and said that what you had been didn't matter so much as what you were and were going to be.

Ella thought that, too. She had thought she was going to be a musician, but she knew, now, she wasn't because she simply could not practise scales a whole hour a day and, anyhow, in her heart she knew she loved jazz and rag-time music and that classical music had no sound at all—just scales and things. Now, she was going to be an artist and took lessons every Saturday morning from Miss Clark, in a class where almost everyone was much older and she drew pictures of milk bottles and water pitchers with lemons and tomatoes beside them, "still life groups."

Hattie would read to Ella, too. She liked Hattie's reading better than Mother's, because when Mother read a continued story she would read just one chapter and close the book and say, "That's enough for today, daughter; we must keep something for tomorrow," and wouldn't give Ella the book, though at ten she could read very nicely by herself.

Ella felt that Hattie didn't know the words quite as well as Mother because they didn't sound quite the same. But Hattie wouldn't stop at the end of a chapter, just when you got interested. She would read on and on until it was time for her to peel the potatoes for dinner. After dinner, if her Father and Mother went out, Ella would ask Hattie to read again, and even if she was mending for Mother, Hattie would read before Ella's bedtime.

Hattie stayed at home, nights, too. All the girls were supposed to stay at home nights. Ella knew that. That was one thing girls were for, so that she wasn't

in the house alone. But Ella knew that the servant girls who had beaux always went walking with them, when her parents were gone. The girl would say, "I'm out on the back porch, if you want me, Miss Ella," after she put Ella in bed and turned down the light.

Ella knew, even if she called and called, that the girl wasn't on the back porch. She never told about it. It just made the girl mad and there were so many things the girl could do, like not giving you cookies after school or telling you if you were asked for, over the telephone. Hattie was always there. "Hattie, Hat-tee," Ella would call and there Hattie was, right in her own room, only a few steps away, the whole time.

"Want me, dear?" she would say, and bring Ella cool drinks with bits of ice in them, which was extra and not necessary, but pleasant, for you could suck the ice after you finished drinking the water.

Hattie never had company, like the other girls. She never went places, during her spare time, evenings when the folks were home and her afternoons off. That was part of the mystery about Hattie. There was more mystery than that, though.

Sometimes Mamma would say, sort of carelessly, "Does Hattie ever tell you things you can't repeat to Mother, dear?" and things like that. Ella couldn't think of a single thing. The other girls always did. They wanted to talk about where babies came from and tell things that made you feel all mixed up and unhappy, but of course Ella couldn't tell Mother that. Hattie never talked about herself at all, except about when she was a little girl and lived on a farm and she never said a single thing that made you sort of ashamed.

Hattie did nice things. She painted your bicycle and got Dave to make a new seat for the swing and mended the tennis net and took you walking, in the evening, and let you stop, sometimes, and listen to the Salvation Army, which sang on the corner of High Street, the men in caps with red bands on them and with drums and the women in

bonnets who had high squeaky voices and tambourines. She gave Ella a nickel once, for the tambourine.

Ella had hoped that Hattie would stay with them all of the time, like Dave did. Dave had been with them for years, and, though Dave wasn't very much pleasure, still it was better to know that it would always be Dave there than some nigger like the Hoppers had, who squirted a hose on you and pretended it was an accident. Dave would take care of your garden, if you forgot it and let you keep anything but a snake in the garage. If it hadn't been for the ladies who came to see her mother that afternoon, Ella always felt that things might have gone on nicely.

She remembered that afternoon, always.

III

ELLA was sitting on the porch, way over to the side by the dining-room, cutting out paper dolls. The porch was a long, narrow one with a railing around it. It was painted a gray on the floor part and the steps, and the railing was white, like the house. The paint was blistered and you could pierce little flat, dry blisters with your finger-nail. The hammock was over on the dining-room side. On the other side were benches and chairs and a little table. That's where her mother and her friends sat, when Ella's mother had company in the afternoon.

Ella was cutting paper dolls when her mother and her friends came out on the porch. She hadn't even expected them to come out on the porch. In fact, until Hattie had told her that she had to make sandwiches and lemonade for ladies, Ella hadn't known her mother was going to have company. The paper dolls were not very nice ones. They were the kind that come in an envelope, three sheets of dolls and three sheets of dresses, labeled "Dolly Dimples and Her Playmates." Aunt Sophie had brought them on her last visit. The dresses have little tabs on the shoulders that bend down over the doll but they are not

much fun to play with because the dresses always fall off when you take the dolls up and usually the tabs break off before long.

The ladies came out on the porch with a great clatter and moving of chairs. They were all sewing. There were five ladies besides Ella's mother, Mrs. Robinson, and Mrs. Kessler—Fred's mother,—and Mrs. Georgine and old Mrs. Georgine—(maybe her mother?)—and Mrs. Hamilton.

First they talked for a long time about Mrs. Morton, who was new on the street. Ella listened to them, between thinking about the book Hattie was reading to her and about the paper dolls and about the picnic she was invited to for next Tuesday.

"—I don't know what the world is is coming to. I thought she looked like such a nice little woman. . . ."

"Mrs. Kessler told me her husband was a traveling man, so I thought of course it was he when I saw her visitor. Then, quite accidentally, you know how those things happen, old Hoffman, the butcher, said to me, 'I see your new neighbor has got her brother visiting her again.' Well, I wouldn't let on to him. I just nodded and said, yes, I didn't know the family but I understood they had visitors. . . ."

"You simply can't trust anyone at all these days—"

Ella didn't listen for a while, then. She was not interested in Mrs. Morton's brother. She could have told them all about her brother. He was a fat man and he always carried a cane and had the funniest little mustache Ella had ever seen. He bought boxes of candy at the Palace and had a soda there, all by himself, one day that he bought candy and he left a dime on the marble table for the girl.

When she listened again they were talking about cooking. Mrs. Georgine's husband—not old Mrs. Georgine, she was too old to have a husband, if she ever had had one—was an awful crank about eating. He simply would not eat hot meat in summer. It meant planning complete cold suppers all summer long.

It wasn't so much the work as the bother to think things up. "Have you tried that new vegetable salad, in tomato jelly—it really looks awfully well—you take six tomatoes, not too soft—"

Ella went back to her paper dolls. It was her own name she heard then,

"—she is simply devoted to Ella—"

Then, "Be careful, little pitchers have big ears, you know."

Ella hated the joke about "little pitchers." She didn't know whether it meant pictures, the sort you look at, or pitchers, the kind you drink out of. Pitchers, the kind you drink out of, don't have ears at all. It was without any sense at all. Of course she knew what it meant.

Her mother called her,

"Ella, why don't you go out and play?"

"Yes, Mother. Mrs. Robinson—is Hortense home?"

"No, dear, Hortense is spending the day with her Grandmother."

"The boys are on a picinc, aren't they, Mrs. Kessler?"

"Yes, dear," to Ella, and then, in a grown-up tone to the others, "I just know Fred will come home with something wrong with him. He either eats too much on picnics or gets some sort of bites all over him."

Ella went on with her paper dolls. Her mother glanced at her and said.

"She really doesn't listen. It's too hot for her to run around in the sun, anyhow."

Mrs. Hamilton had been talking. She went on, now, in a lower tone, nearly every word of which was quite distinguishable to Ella:

"I'm only telling you because I think you ought to know on account of Ella. It's the influence a kind of woman like that can have on a young child. I wouldn't say anything, only Mr. Robinson saw this himself and he thought I ought to talk to you about it. The other night, Tuesday, I think it was, Hattie had little Ella out walking, didn't she?"

Ella's mother waited, nodded then. The others listened.

"Well," Mrs. Hamilton went on, "she and the child stopped to watch the Salvation Army. It was quite dark. And right there, with your innocent child along, that woman stopped to talk with men—to—to pick them up, you might say."

"I—I knew she was no good before she came here," said Ella's mother, "but she had so much to say—about wanting another chance. I don't see where she gets out any—she never takes an evening off. Still—if you say—"

"They always find time to run around, that class of women," old Mrs. Georgine added. She was knitting a gray scarf and when she rocked, she hit a board in the porch floor that made a funny, jumpy sound.

"It isn't fair," said the younger Mrs. Georgine. "You meant to do well, I know, but with a tender little flower in the house to guard," she lowered her voice as she glanced toward the tender flower.

"And not only that," Mrs. Hamilton went on. "The other night a friend of Mrs. Hamilton's recognized Hattie, when she came in to borrow flour. He asked if Hattie hadn't been a familiar figure—"

Voices were lower, then, but there was no explaining how Mrs. Hamilton's friend had got into a position where he could recognize Hattie as a "familiar figure."

Ella wanted to stand up in front of them all and say that Hattie was fine—"finer than all of you." Of course she couldn't say it. She kissed Hattie good-night that night and said, "When I'm a lady, Hattie, you and I can go to Europe together, for a long, long travel, away from everybody I know."

The next day, Ella's mother said to Ella, in that funny, pretend-to-be careless way,

"Ella, try to remember, when you were out with Hattie did she ever speak to any—to any old friends she knew—when you heard the Salvation Army that night—"

Ella pretended great thoughtfulness, "No, Mother," she said, "We didn't meet a soul we knew. We only listened until they sang two songs and started preaching. There wasn't anybody around we knew at all."

Her mother didn't ask her anything else.

IV

Two days later, Hattie was gone. Her eyes were red, when she left and she sobbed,

"Good-bye, Miss Ella, don't forget me—don't think too badly of Hattie, when you grow up."

"I—I shall always love you, Hattie," said Ella, "I love you Hat-tee" and Ella cried, too. She wasn't much given to telling folks she loved them nor to crying.

Two weeks later, she heard her parents talking about Hattie at the breakfast table. They stopped, suddenly, as she came in but went back to the subject later, as she knew they would do—as they always did when they changed the subject at her approach.

"Yes, Louie Beagles said she'd gone back to her old haunts. He said she was worse than ever." He didn't say how Beagles got the information. "You see, it don't help trying to reform a woman like that. I told you in the beginning. A woman who is once bad stays bad, no matter what you do for

her. Here, you took her into your home . . . tried to help her. . . ."

"And with little Ella, too," they both glanced at Ella.

"Be careful—little pitchers, you know. It just shows, though, what a risk a family can run. Thank Heavens the girl we got now is from the country. . . ."

The new servant girl was named Gussie. She was a stupid sort who blamed things on Ella and she could hardly read at all and of course couldn't read stories. She knew a lot of jokes, the kind that have unpleasant ideas connected with them, and liked to talk about where babies come from.

Ella was older, now, nearly eleven, and could understand jokes like that better now. They didn't make her feel so much as if she had been doing wrong to listen to them. For weeks, though, she thought of Hattie, and wished that Hattie was there to read to her. Hattie—my, but Hattie was a fine one—she could talk nice about things and read stories—Ella made up her mind never to throw away the little Chinaman-head pincushion she found in her ribbon drawer the day after Hattie went away. She didn't believe the things Gussie told her about Hattie. Sometimes, on rainy nights, she went to sleep, tears all blurring her eyes and running down unpleasantly on the pillow. She'd say "Hattie, Hat-tee," to herself. Ella's family never got another servant girl like Hattie.



A MAN wonders how his name will look on a tombstone. A woman wonders how hers will look in electric lights.



WHEN a married couple tell you individually that they're happy, you know that one, at least, is lying.



En Route

By S. N. Behrman

I

“**A**RRIVING Back Bay Station
—3:30. Elza.”

She paid for the telegram and glanced at the illuminated clock in the centre of the Concourse. Ten minutes until train time.

She stood for a moment, uncertainly, dimly aware of the sunlight streaming through the great steel-grilled windows of the station, of the upthrust of skyscrapers into the bright blue sky. The vast starred dome of the station was like a picture of heaven in a child's mythology, striped with zodiacs, with strange errant lines. “At the apex sat Zeus. . . .” All the mythology she had learned in her childhood came tumbling out of her memory. To whom was Zeus married? What wonderful affairs went on in the Pagan heaven!

And then she thought of a boy she had met at a tea—an English poet. She had gone to the station with him one day when he had to take a train to Chicago. As they walked down the staircase leading to the Concourse, he had said:

“The proper thing for this place is an organ. The biggest organ in the world. I'd have Bach's fugues and preludes going all day. The Passacaglia to announce the Chicago Limited. They really ought to do it, don't you think?”

He had turned to her with a smile. She remembered that in the presence of this boy she had been inarticulate and always thought afterward of apt things she might have said. What was he doing now, she wondered? He had been a nice boy and she had been very stupid. . . .

What would Frank say if someone suggested to him to put an organ into the Grand Central Station. She smiled. She knew exactly what Frank would say. He would say the man was a “nut.”

Charming boy, though, Frank. A child, in spite of his thirty-two years. Curious, to be going this way to meet his family.

II

SHE wasn't nervous about Frank's brothers and sisters but she was considerably worried about his grandmother. The old lady was over seventy and seldom left her house—a mansion with historic associations—in the Back Bay section of Boston. A couplet about Boston's aristocracy came to the surface of Elza's mind:

*For the Lowells talk only to the
Cabots,
And the Cabots talk only to God.*

Frank's people were neither Lowells nor Cabots but they moved in that sublimated atmosphere. Certainly Frank's grandmother could speak to anybody and did, very often, with the acidity characteristic of her. There were many stories about the terrible old lady. She had been a great friend of Mrs. Fields, a Boston dignitary, the widow of the famous New England publisher. Through this friendship she had known intimately all the great literary lights of New England in the sixties and seventies.

The elder Mrs. Forbush lived still with the vanished gods of the Massa-

chusetts Valhalla. Modern writers, especially of the irreverent sort, she execrated. Elza, who had begun a correspondence with the old lady after the announcement of her engagement to Frank, wrote to her once about her literary enthusiasm. Elza had just finished "The New Machiavelli" and the letter was chiefly an adoration of its author. When Mrs. Forbush finished this letter, she rose from her chair, took her stick and, with uncustomary animation, went to her grandson's room.

"Frank," she began, clipping her words ominously, "you never told me that Elza reads Wells!"

She spoke the name as if it were synonymous with Antichrist.

Frank, who knew only very vaguely who Mr. Wells was, saw no harm in reading him, but he knew better than to dispute with his grandmother.

"Oh, Elza goes in for all these chaps," he said lightly. "But she doesn't really take them seriously."

The old lady was not placated. She wrote a cutting letter to Elza in which she informed her that she did *not* consider Wells a great man, that admiration of such writings was a mark of polluted taste in letters, reminded her that America had a culture of her own, not inferior to England's, with an added spiritual quality that the more sophisticated nations lacked.

In the same post she received a desperate note from Frank begging her not to "spring any more of these gay writers" on his grandmother. He was himself not narrow in his literary tastes—he liked a snappy book himself once in a while—but his grandmother was old-fashioned, etc., etc.

Frank, whose favorite author was H. C. Witwer, fancied that Wells must be a sort of English Paul de Kock.

III

CURIOUS—about her marrying Frank. He was the last sort of person she had dreamed of marrying. Everyone said that the marriage would turn out beautifully because they were so unlike. Frank

was a nationally known athlete, a champion polo-player. He had been captain of the football team at Harvard.

Elza considered it curious, too, that he wanted so badly to marry her. But he had, as he expressed it, "fallen hard" for Elza, made love to her with a naïveté that touched her. It was said by some that Elza was not uninfluenced by Frank's wealth. Sitting now in the Pullman, on her way to meet his people for the first time, she wondered whether Frank's money had something to do with it . . . how much . . . ?

Of course it had had something to do with it. She had anticipated the uses to which she would be able to put Frank's fortune, visualized herself in a splendid rôle, a patron of musicians and orchestras, entertaining poets, artists, statesmen. Already she had got Frank to promise to help a young pianist, a boy of eighteen, of amazing talent. Frank had been so genial about everything, so tolerant, so kind. She had made no attempt to deceive him about the vast divergence of their interests; she had explained to him that she considered most of his friends amiable but dull and that she must, after marriage, continue her own friendships, her own way of living. Frank had nodded sagaciously and comprehendingly:

"Sure," he had said. "You're wearing long skirts. You're old enough to take care of yourself. But if one of these chaps ever gets fresh with you, let me know and I'll knock him for a goal!"

He had been so lovable in this offer of protection that she had put her arms around him suddenly and kissed him. He had been quite surprised at this outburst of affection and looked like a boy, schooled in the ethics of good sportsmanship, who has just received an unmerited reward.

Yes. . . . Frank's good-nature, Frank's money, would make many things possible. She hated the genteel poverty to which she was accustomed, hated having to think of money. Her mother was always scolding her for her extravagant tastes. It was true that she loved

grand gestures, to do things *en princesse*. She could not resist inviting people to box-parties at concerts and theatres. She would go into a bookstore to browse and spend a week's allowance. Only a few days before, her mother had been furious with her for paying seventeen dollars for a first edition of *Liber Amoris*. "A little, dirty book," her mother had said, staring ruefully at her daughter's purchase and comparing it mentally with the gold and crimson glitter of the Five-Foot-Shelf which she had bought for one of Elza's birthdays.

Now, all that was over. She would be able to live freely. She had even persuaded Frank to come to New York to live. His grandmother disapproved thoroughly of this change. The Forbushes, she maintained, belonged in Boston. But in this, too, Elza had her way.

It was no wonder that she felt some trepidation at meeting the lady who remembered Emerson and Channing.

IV

THROUGH the window of the Pullman, the sun streamed on her. In quiet processional, her thoughts trailed off, as if through a darkened door. She stopped thinking of Frank and of his grandmother. For a time she thought of nothing at all. Half-somnolent, she gazed at the far landscape, passing slowly, a vista of trees and, through them, the waters of the Sound, miraculously blue. Sometimes, the train passed quite near the shore and she could see the little waves, like kittens, scurrying up to lap the shore. A strange feeling took possession of her, a poignant awareness of living, of the new-born beauty of the first Spring morning.

It was the first sunny day in weeks. New York had been very disagreeable, plodding rain, muddy streets. Spring had rushed out suddenly, like something pent up escaped from covert. Green showed on trees, little streams rushed busily through tree clumps. Over everything lay a faint, dreamy haze which trembled and vibrated palpably—

quiescence on the verge of waking.

She fell into a long, slow dream in which she was conscious always of the moving, sun-warmed landscape. The haze had lifted slightly but still hovered. Through the screened windows came a redolence. The sky, the water, the trees, the air, were merged into liquesence. The impression grew on her that she was gazing through a clouded crystal at a world submerged in some effluvium. The crystal would cloud and clear, clear and cloud. It formed a slow rhythm in the swell of which she felt herself embraced and swung, lulled and lifted. What was it? . . . the sound and movement of some process. Above the thunder of the train she thought she heard, clearly, a tiny drone.

Her dream deepened but still she felt the things that passed her by. Outside of Stamford a long narrow inlet of water shot like a needle through a great field of grass. She knew that the grass in the field was wet, that through the hollowed bodies of each blade threads of water reached up and flowed. The drops lay quiescent a moment in the sun and shattered. . . . She saw a man sitting on a cart, drawn by a great horse. The man was half-asleep. His head nodded. The horse, too, must be drowsing. She saw herself lying on her back in the middle of the grassy road, drinking in the sun. The man and the cart came trundling along the road on which she was lying. She could not move away and felt a thrill of fear. But the horse and the cart rode over her and she felt no pain.

The train slowed into a city. Hovels under the shadows of grimy factories. Places where they made guns and jewelry. A swarthy large-breasted woman nursing a baby in an open window. Funny things in the houses. Papier-mâché plants. Rooms stuffed with beds, bedding. In the station a scurry of people.

She felt a great interest in all these things: the women, the rooms, the people. And it surprised her that she experienced no repulsion for them. It all seemed necessary and right. Something

kept saying to her: "It has to be like this. It's good. It's good!"

The train moved again into the bright country. She was conscious of a new feeling in herself, a sense of being completely alone, isolated. It was like facing a person she had never met, whom she saw for the first time. There were no other people, there was no memory of what other people said and thought, no vision of people's faces. There was just herself—and the earth over which she moved. What had made this moment possible, suddenly, for the first time in years, for the first time she could remember?

And she saw a being that aroused a strange feeling in her, half pity, half adoration, a being eager for life, passionate, comprehending, tender. And this was she! Not the high-strung, diletante girl, scurrying among art-effects, snapping up epigrams from motley books, nomadically caressive. She saw herself, standing, waiting, with honest eyes. Life was about to do something to her, miraculously touch her. A great stirring took place in her. She had so much to give; she felt abundant as nature. She wanted only someone on whom to lavish herself, this new creature who had emerged suddenly out of deadness.

With a slow hum, the warm fruitful earth bore her along. She felt an ecstasy of mere being. There were, in herself, potentialities so marvelous. She felt sure of herself, sure of the future. Life could not deny her, or ignore her. Whatever happened to her would be good. . . .

A great excitement took possession of

her. . . . In a sort of trance she got up and asked the conductor where the train was. . . .

V

At Springfield she got off the train and telegraphed to Frank. She told him that she had decided suddenly that she could not come, that something had happened about which she would write to him.

When the telegram was sent she sat down on a bench in the station, suddenly weak. She was frightened, depressed. She kept telling herself that now she was free of something she had never really wanted, free for anything. But the sense of liberation did not come.

She had less than an hour to wait for the next train back. She thought of her mother. How would she explain to her mother? All the difficulties of the situation crowded in on her. She told herself that she would think everything out on the journey home. She sat and waited. If only the train would come! She wanted to see again the trees and fields in the sun.

But on the train the exaltation she had experienced before did not return. She looked at the hills and the sky and the water. But they did not speak to her. They were outside of her, unfeeling, dumb.

Something like panic overcame her. But she sat rigid, fighting it, fighting tears, while over and over again she kept repeating to herself, like an incantation:

"It's good! It's good! It *must* be good . . .!"



The Various New Plays

By George Jean Nathan

I

ON the very day that the executives of the Keith vaudeville circuit ruled, in their infinite wisdom, that they would permit no more jokes on Prohibition in their theatres, on the ground that the public was sick to death of them, Arthur Hopkins achieved a signal success by producing Don Marquis' "The Old Soak," which is full of Prohibition jokes from its beginning to its end. The success is deserved, for, though the play itself is a grand hash of all the old reliables since the reign of James A. Garfield, it vouchsafes a central character, a subsidiary one, and an overtone of observant humour that are as fresh as the rest of the things revealed in the theatre up to the evening of its production have been stale. Marquis has taken a perfectly obvious leading character and, by prudently sticking close to an obvious projection of him, has made him recognizably real, and immensely amusing. In only two instances has he played his character of the venerable souse, alumnus of a thousand barrooms, directly for footlight effect; for the rest the fellow steps, if perhaps not directly out of life, surely out of the hundred and one semi-real and graphic legends of life that pass for life in the playhouse. Marquis' Clem Hawley and his friend Al, the ex-bartender, are a contribution to the choice gallery of distinctively American dramatic portraits, and their humours—albeit at times somewhat patent—the racy humours that our theatre is all too deficient in. "The Old Soak" is a wistful valedictory to the brass rail: the "Old Heidelberg" of Prohibition. The

play I do not recommend. But heartily do I commend to your notice Clem and Al, the former acted superbly by Harry Beresford and the latter most entertainingly by Robert O'Connor.

II

THE cast of characters of "So This Is London!", by Arthur Goodrich, is as follows:

Hiram Draper
Mrs. Hiram Draper
Hiram Draper, Jr.
Sir Percy Beauchamp
Lady Beauchamp
Eleanor Beauchamp

Substitute for these names the following:

Isadore Garfunkel
Mrs. Isadore Garfunkel
Isadore Garfunkel, Jr.
Van Buren Kelly
Mrs. Van Buren Kelly
Mary Kelly

And you have the old "House Next Door," "Consequences" and "Abie's Irish Rose" theme with the superficial transmutation of the Jews into Americans and the Christians into Englishmen. Otherwise, the play remains the same. There is, on the one side, the American family that hates the English, and, on the other, the English family that hates everything American. There is the usual love affair between the son of the one house and the daughter of the other. There is the usual explosion and the stereotyped understanding at the finish. Change the names of the characters as I have suggested, put a seven-branched candlestick on the man-

telpiece, cast a blonde for Mary Kelly and a hook-nosed brunet for Isadore, Jr., and send Rabbi Stephen S. Wise two seats down front for the opening night—and not even Mr. J. Ranken Towse could tell the difference.

The play has been produced by Mr. George M. Cohan, whose amusing little touches give the manuscript what air of modernity it possesses. That manuscript belongs otherwise to the period of "The Man From Home," "Getting A Polish" and other such hokum festivals of a by-gone day. Although the present play may draw in a deal of boodle for all I know, I have a strong feeling that Mr. Cohan's erstwhile enormously successful box-office formula has gone—or is soon about to go—by the board. Countless imitators, some of them bad and some of them, like Winchell Smith, very good, have been hammering away at the formula for so long now that the public has had its fill of it. What is more, the public taste has greatly improved in the last ten years. It no longer swallows with its quondam relish the things for which it once had so hospitable a stomach. The spectacle of the American flag, at least for the time being, excites it to no more hoop-las than the spectacle of a lady's nightshirt. The two-million-dollar business deal jounces it no more than the flag. And the grand finale in which everyone trots out in Wetzels and Bendels leaves it as cold as an Esquimo pie.

Edmund Breese plays the American millionaire like a comic strip. The same is true of Lawrance D'Orsay as the English knight. The women, notably Miss Lilly Cahill and Miss Marie Carroll, are engagingly unobstreperous.

III

EDWARD PAULTON'S farce, "Her Temporary Husband," is of the period of Brandon Thomas, H. A. Du Souchet and Girard and Donnelly. It harks back to the farce epoch when a set of false whiskers or a woman's dress promptly deceived all the characters on the stage into believing that the leading man was

his own grandfather or aunt from Australia, and when a great climax to the second act was achieved by getting all the characters suddenly to yell their lines at the tops of their voices, the while the leading lady fainted on the sofa at right and the butler fell down stairs at left. Mr. Paulton's conception of farce is of a theatrical entertainment wherein the central male character is made to laugh uproariously from start to finish at Mr. Paulton's ingenious humour. This role, in the present exhibit, is played by Mr. William Courtenay, a veteran who indicates his irrepressible youth by wearing a sport shirt carelessly opened at the neck and by periodically jumping over the back of a chair.

IV

THE best thing in the new George White "Scandals" is the group of musical bootleggers known as Paul Whiteman's Jazz Orchestra. But, even so, it is one thing to listen to a jazz band with a pre-eminent ham-cheese-egg-caviar-salami-lettuce sandwich in one hand, a seidel of champagne in the other, and both feet on those of a cutie, and quite another to listen to it in a formal and austere theatre seat. One must be in a more or less idiotic and devolsteaded condition to listen to jazz with a true professorial ear—and one is unfortunately not in that blissful state at 9:30 p. m. in a showhouse. Thus, though these musical cannibals are admirable in their way and though there is nothing else in the exhibit to vie with them, they somehow seem a trifle out of place without the background of a polished floor covered with bumping trotters, the usual number of pickled Elks, Chicago drummers and Yale boys, the flirtatious cigarette vivandière, four-dollar club sandwiches, and pocket flasks.

The rest of the "Scandals" is merely a denaturized "Follies." Some of the girls are doubtless quite good-looking, but White has not caught Ziegfeld's trick of showing them off to advantage. A burlesque of the radio fad is potentially very amusing, but careless direc-

tion causes it to go largely for naught. White himself is an expert hooper; there are few better; Ziegfeld can't clog one-thousandth so well; but as the latter is sufficiently astute to engage a dancer for the staging of his shows so should the former be equally astute in engaging, for the staging of his, some imaginative fellow with flat feet.

V

"THE ENDLESS CHAIN," by James Forbes, is the play in which, at quarter of eleven, the forgiving husband grasps his wife back to his bosom and exclaims, "We will wipe the slate clean and start afresh tomorrow!" It is, antecedently and further, the play in which the rich man sends the poor young husband off to Minnesota to look over the mines and thus clears the way for a loose eye at the latter's personable young wife. It is, further still and in general, a revamping of the theme of Eugene Walter's "Paid In Full" and the German Rudolf Lothar's "I Love You" with a liberal draping of dramatic chintz. Mr. Forbes, in this effort as in the past, writes good Broadway; even above this, he occasionally writes with a sound and accurate eye to character and the idiosyncrasies of human nature; but his work in the bulk never rises above adroit mediocrity. The present exhibit is redeemed by a remarkably fine performance of its central role on the part of Miss Margaret Lawrence, one of the very best young actresses on the American stage. How long she will command this eminence is, however, a matter for speculation, since already one sadly detects in her otherwise brilliant and utterly charming playing a periodic recourse to such cuckoo tricks of leading lady histrionism as the handkerchief clutched at the mouth, the palm pressed to the cheek, the forearm, fist clenched, raised and lowered two or three times by way of indicating a despairing appeal, the shoulders drooped over a table, head cupped in hands, to indicate dejection and defeat, and so on. A pity. For this young woman, aside from such

banalities—some of them perhaps due to Mr. Forbes' stereotyped direction—is as effective and captivating an actress of the light order as one could wish to find.

VI

IN "The Torch Bearers," by George Kelly, there is much of the quality of close observation, shrewd humour and palatable slapstick so often found in the cartoons and caricatures of Hill, Webster and other such excellent newspaper funny men. A mockery of amateur theatricals and the Little Theatre craze, it is composed of two acts adroitly transcribed from life and a third act laboriously transcribed from the author's memory of Broadway jay-jouncers. Aside from this third act, however, the play shows an originality uncommon to the local theatre; it consistently departs the accepted rules and regulations of the night in, night out products that demean the ear; its author—out of the same vaudevilles that provided the Nugent of "Kempy" and the Tom Barry of "The Upstart"—will bear watching. The play is well acted, and worth seeing.

VII

THREE-FOURTHS of the modern Italian drama is exceptionally seedy stuff. Still very largely a patterning after the French, with here and there a distinct echo of the pre-war young German comedy school, it offers very little of merit for the American stage. The popular Italian drama is, in particular, weak going. I know of no purely box-office play produced in Italy in the last fifteen years that is one-half so good a specimen of its kind as even the American Mr. Roi Cooper Megrue can produce, or one-half so good as those contrived on a somewhat higher plane by the German that such more talented Italians as Luigi Pirandello are at times fond of imitating, to wit, the amusingly satirical Thaddeus Rittner. Pirandello is, perhaps, strictly speaking, not to be listed as a box-office playwright, but surely he is not on a level with such

comedy writers among his fellow-countrymen as del Testa, Bracco, Giacosa or Martini. He stands half-way between that group on the one hand and, on the other, such playwriting journalists of the Italian Broadway as the authors of "Quello Che Non T'Aspetti," lately produced here as "The Plot Thickens." In this box-office attempt (a locally unsuccessful one), Luigi Barzini, an Italian newspaperman, and his collaborator, Arnaldo Fraccaroli, whose name and the nature of whose regular job are unknown to me, have tried to confect a kind of "Madeleine and the Movies" with a reverse twist, but their piece is laboured, without humour, repetitious and excessively dull. At no point does it begin to compare with the better-grade box-office play of native manufacture. Mr. Thomas Beer, a sagacious juggler of English, did his best to inject some life into an adapted version, but the original—together with Mr. Brock Pemberton's fear that the Italian second act might offend American morals—stood in his way. The play was acted in an amateurish manner by a poor company headed by Mr. Edwin Nicander and a French-Canadian doll, the Mademoiselle Remy Carpen.

VIII

MISS MARIE TEMPEST is an absolutely first-rate comedienne who is not one-half so effective in the theatre as an absolutely second-rate comedienne like, say, Miss Dorothy Minto. She has carried her technique to a point of perfection where it is utterly lifeless. She is able to move the critics to admiration, but she is unable to move the rest of her audience to any emotional response. She is as meticulously accurate as a clock, and equally exciting. Every gesture, every inflection, every movement, every pause, is so painstakingly exact, so elaborately precise, that the histrionic performance completely obscures the easy values of the material with which it is engaged. She is to acting what the college professor is to critical writing: her manners are faultless, her facts are

orderly and her style is impeccable—and with it all she has approximately as much glow as a glass of iced tea. Her current appearance is in a play by Arthur Richman called "A Serpent's Tooth," a feeble comedy contrived with none of the skill exhibited by its author in "Ambush." In the company there is a young actor, Leslie Howard, who—without one-fifth the star's technical equipment and experience, gives a performance that is five times as captivating. I recommend an evening with Miss Tempest to the young women of the American stage. It will prove to them illuminatingly what has been frequently hinted at in these pages, to wit, that effective acting is often not so much art as artlessness, and that cold technical perfection is no less often the franc-tireur of warm emotional response.

IX

"FOOLS ERRANT," by Louis Evan Shipman, is the kind of play that used to be presented twice every week in the London theatres when George Bernard Shaw was dramatic critic for *The Saturday Review* and that drove the estimable Georg, out of the agony of his nightly experiences, into writing plays that he could sit through with some comfort and enjoyment. It is a conclave of the ghosts of Pinero, Jones, Grundy, Marie Corelli, H. V. Esmond, R. C. Carton, Robert Buchanan, Comyns Carr and Lena Ashwell gathered together at the old tea-table, gabbling the benign old sex gabble and looking up, cups poised in anticipation, when Fothergill, the butler, announces the return of Jim Prothero—dear, good old Jim—who gave up a peerage to go out to Australia to "find himself." Since the play itself did not interest me in the slightest, I spent the evening amusing myself by watching Mr. Vincent Serano, one of the cabotins, draw his handkerchief out of his breast pocket with vastly nonchalant mien and then painstakingly put it back again with a scrupulous exactness that it might not suffer a lapse from its precise and very

natty pyramid effect. After I had beheld the M. Serrano negotiate this coup twenty-seven times I regarded that I had had sufficient amusement for one evening, and—tripping in the dark over a very pretty flapper in the rear aisle—went home.

X

THE habitual *modus operandi* of the theatrical entrepreneur when he wishes to produce a musical comedy is to obtain as poor a libretto as he can lay his hands on and then set about sedulously to conceal its poorness with a smoke screen of fancy scenery, girls, and a vaudeville comedian whose act consists in burlesquing the classical dancers. This procedure has again been obediently followed by the producers of "Molly Darling." But, by the happy accident of finding in their comedian—his name is Jack Donahue—a fellow who, aside from the ancient act alluded to, is gifted with a fresh and laughable arsenal of humour, and by the further happy accident of locating a couple of exceptionally good dancers, they have converted their dismal libretto and equally dismal score into very fair entertainment. The Donahue is perhaps the best of the more recently revealed music show drolls. He is the most amusing comic dancer since Frisco, and he gets twice as much value out of his spoken wheezes as his dancing rival, Jim Barton.

XI

"I WILL IF YOU WILL," by Crane Wilbur, which even as I write is on its way to the storehouse, is a compote beyond understanding. I can understand how a man can write such drivel, but what I can't understand is how anyone can produce it. When in the past Mr. George Broadhurst, its sponsor, has put on such equally melancholy ones as "Tarzan of the Apes," "The Elton Case" and the like, I have gratuitously and not a little bumptiously essayed to suggest substitute plays that he might have presented with much surer chances of box-office success—and certainly with much more credit to himself. I have

been sorry to see him lose so much of his money. I now formally apologize to him. After viewing this Wilbur play I feel that I have done him a gross injustice in assuming that he, a fairly good business man, is so profound a hansdoodle as to waste his own money on such an exhibit, or any other resembling it. That is, I apologize if my assumption that he gets some one else to put up the money is not correct. If it is not correct, I can only reiterate my erstwhile conviction that Mr. Broadhurst is an extremely foolish fellow. But that he is this foolish fellow I privilege myself to doubt. There was at least one indication in the present play that gives rise to this doubt. I surely do not hold all this against Mr. Broadhurst—please do not for a moment mistake me. If anyone came to me and asked me to produce "I Will If You Will," I'd do it too—and readily enough. But I would charge at least \$100,000.

XII

If you have any respect for my talents as a theatrical critic, I ask you please to forget the above paragraph, and immediately. At least the greater part of it. For, since writing it, I have seen Mr. Broadhurst's second production of the season, "Wild Oats Lane." "Wild Oats Lane" was written by Mr. Broadhurst himself and therefore, just as it is doubtful that he wasted his own money on "I Will If You Will," so is it pretty certain that he *has* wasted it on this play. I say wasted, for if there still remains a public taste for so antiquated a specimen then I shall promptly sell my black velvet robe with the silver crescents on it, my glass ball and my supply of Japanese punk, and go back into the saloon business. "Wild Oats Lane" is the play that enchanted the tank-towns twenty-five and thirty years ago: the wet-eyed lulu in which the kindly, big-hearted, God-fearing, fat old star actor saves the weak girl from the primrose path, reforms the lad bent on evil ways, wins back the love of his sweet little ward from the reprobate father who,

returned after these many years, would claim her and take her from him, and recites all his tender speeches with his head thrown back and his eyes closed. I accordingly withdraw my apology to Mr. Broadhurst, and follow my old bumptious and exasperating custom of giving him the names of several plays, any one of which he might have adapted and produced to his infinitely greater credit and financial gain. The names of the plays: Ludwig Thoma's "Moral," Hermann Bahr's "Principle," Maurice Donnay's "The Patroness," the Danish Karen Bramson's "Power of a King" or, if that is a trifle too serious, the comedy, "His Highness," by the Germans von Schlicht and Turczinski, Romain Coolus' "Heart to Heart," produced at the Antoine back in 1907, or the Swedish Ernst Didring's Continental success of a decade ago, "High Stakes." Mr. Broadhurst is not—he is distinctly not—the good business man I believed him to be.

XIII

IF Mr. Charles Dillingham were to open the Hippodrome next season with a No. 4 company of "I Will If You Will" composed entirely of sophomores from the Sargent School of Acting, were to use scenery from the No. 12 company of William A. Brady's 1904 production of "The Man of the Hour," and were to have the entr'-acte orchestra confine itself to selections from Richard Carle's old miserere, "Jumping Jupiter," the newspaper reviewers would the next morning still obediently proclaim the exhibition "bigger and better than any of its predecessors." The thing has become a habit, like eulogizing the "silky quality" of Mr. Belasco's productions and trying to locate a spittoon in Winthrop Ames' Little Theatre. The Hippodrome is the morganatic bride of the local reviewing adjective.

This year's show is called "Better Times." While it is unquestionably "bigger and better" than last year's show, and the show of the year preceding, it does not compare with the great spectacles presented in the Hippodrome

when that institution was under the control, first, of Fred Thompson and, later, of the Shuberts. These early spectacles were rousing and original things of their kind; there was nothing like them anywhere in the world. The more recent exhibitions are merely swollen "Follies" shows bereft of delicacy, beautiful women, boudoir lighting, and all the other vital elements of which Ziegfeld is master. However, appraising the current show with the purposes for which it has been designed in immediate view, one finds it—as indicated—a distinct improvement over the directly antecedent presentations. The high notes are a dance fantasy in black and white (a tasteful and attractive number), an episode called "At the Grand Opera Ball" wherein the characters out of the operas issue forth from a gigantic phonograph to the accompaniment of the appropriate melodies and end up in a revel of jazz led by a syncopated vaudeville orchestra and a marching brass band, and an elaborate and well-coloured ballet of fans. These numbers are superior to anything in last year's exhibition. And they are not all. The great feature of the present show is something else, yet, surprisingly enough, it has been overlooked by every blessed one of the newspaper gentlemen—even by those who are annually most lavish with the grease bucket. In the past shows, the large Hippodrome tank has been filled with water. This year it is filled nightly with *genuine Gordon gin*! This explains the mystery of the disappearing diving girls.

XIV

COMING out of the Brevoort restaurant a month or so ago, I dropped and lost fifty cents. I now know what became of it. Mrs. Marguerite Abbott Barker found it and with it produced the revue called "A Fantastic Fricassee" in the Greenwich Village Theatre.

XV

"DREAMS FOR SALE" is by Owen Davis.

XVI

PRODUCED with imagination and taste, the new "Greenwich Village Follies" is far and away the best of the John Murray Anderson series. The dancing is particularly good; the scenic pictures are novel and attractive; and the inimitable Savoy and Brennan are funnier than ever before. Of all the teamed comics that we have, these gents seem to me the most amusing. They are unabashedly vulgar; their humour is as blue as the mind of a vice-crusader; they go at the ribs with axes. They are not content with laughs; they stalk the roar. And what is more, they get it. I recommend them, and the show that they are in, to your blasé notice.

XVII

IN Avery Hopwood's "Why Men Leave Home" I can see nothing but the apparent blow-up of a highly talented playwright who has sold his sound skill to the box-office for so long a period that, now trying to write a play of the better grade, he finds the thing impossible. This play, in truth, is very stale stuff, rewritten obviously and from the stereotyped showhouse comedy point of view. Hopwood's decline is one of my sorest critical spots. Long ago I wrote of him that his talent for farce comedy was of a piece with that of the more diverting Frenchmen; and he bore out—as for example, in "Our Little Wife" and in "Fair and Warmer"—that estimate of him. But with the passing of each successive year he has deliberately chased the dollar with more and more crudity and wantonness, until now little remains of his great promise but a memory. In Avery Hopwood Broadway has chalked up still another victim.

XVIII

"Banco," by Alfred Savoir, is mild boulevard fare, adroitly adapted by Clare Kummer. . . . "It's A Boy," by W. A. McGuire, is the conventional box-office bout in which the ambitious young wife weans her husband from his safe and steady job in the small town and persuades him to take a spectacular flier in New York, resulting in the young husband's ruin and the young wife's tearful "seeing the light." A baby is elaborately injected into the present traffic, but, despite the title of the exhibit, has hardly anything to do with the play. The cast is good, and the play will undoubtedly impress many thousands of yokels as a great masterpiece. . . . On a very much higher level than either of these is "The Awful Truth," by the author of "A Serpent's Tooth." Roughly speaking, a paraphrase of "The Case of Rebellious Susan," it is composed of two shrewdly written and divertingly observant acts, and a third that is exceedingly weak. It is in all departments, however, an improvement over the comedy by the same playwright in which Miss Tempest is currently appearing. It is, in the main, sophisticated and pleasantly merry stuff. And it is very agreeably and satisfactorily played by Miss Ina Claire, Mr. Bruce McRae and a competent supporting company. Although I know no more about women's dresses than I know about the ischio-rectal fossa, the Peloponnesian War or Peggy Hopkins, it yet strikes me in my lamentable ignorance that Miss Claire knows absolutely nothing of the way to get herself up properly. Surely a pretty blonde thing like herself should know better than to confine the draperies of her person to pinks and maroons. To put a blonde in pink is to put sugar in Chartreuse.



Chiefly Pathological

By *H. L. Mencken*

I

AT this season of the year—I write in mid-September—it is one of the amiable jocosities of the Lord God Omnipotent to shake me up a bit with hay-fever. Let me confess at once that the assault is seldom of a serious nature. I do not sneeze much, I have no asthma, and it is seldom that my eyes are crippled enough to interfere with my daily work. Nevertheless, even the mildest sort of hay-fever is extremely unpleasant, as even the mildest attack of smallpox would be unpleasant, and so I usually reach the ides of October in a low and bilious frame of mind, with atheism in my heart and a couple of new human enemies. One of these new enemies, I regret to say, is commonly the medical man who has been having his fun with my hay-fever, and converting me into a laboratory animal to his private profit. I have been treated, in my time, by fifteen or twenty such practitioners, all of them strictly ethical and some of them eminent in the trade. It is my firm conviction, reached after due prayer, that even the best of them actually knew no more about the causes, nature and cure of hay-fever than a moving-picture actor knows of paleontology. This year, having avoided them, I feel free to speak of them frankly and without heat. My view of their talents may be precipitated very neatly into the earnest hope that all of them, when their time comes to die, will be condemned by the ultimate Obergericht to roast in hell forevermore.

In this hope I do not presume to include the learned Dr. W. C. Hollo-

peter, of Philadelphia, author of "Hay-Fever: Its Prevention and Cure" (*Funk*), for he has never enjoyed the honor of torturing me personally, but all the same I have a suspicion that, for all his diligent study of the disease, he really knows but little more about it than the distinguished pathologists who have boggled my own case. This suspicion is supported by the fact that in the present edition of his work, which is the fourth, he greatly modifies the position he took in his earlier editions. In those editions he was hot for a scheme of local treatment which embraced scrubbing the nasopharynx with camphor, sodium borate, menthol and carbolic acid—a treatment very probably grounded (in so far as it worked at all) upon the well-known fact that carbolic acid is a local anæsthetic. But now, apparently shaken out of his old confidence by the work that has been done by immunologists, he gives his approval to a great complex of treatments, with chief stress upon those employing vaccines. I am as familiar with all these vaccines as the oldest guinea-pig in the Rockefeller Institute. The use of the best of them, I believe, is analogous to the use of face bleaches in the treatment of yellow jaundice; that of the worst (and commonest) of them is on all fours with the use of a mad-stone in the treatment of hydrophobia. In brief, they are of very dubious value, and even when they seem to relieve a case of hay-fever they fall very short of curing it. That so sober and accomplished an authority as Dr. Hollopeter should put his trust in them is simply a proof that pathology, when it comes to hay-fever, is bankrupt.

Its bankruptcy is due, I believe, to the fact that the study of the disease, if study it may be called, has been carried on chiefly by nose and throat men, whose interest has been concentrated upon the symptoms lying within the field of their speciality. In other words, they have assumed, like the average layman, that hay-fever is a local disease of the upper air-passages, and all their efforts have been directed to combatting what goes on in that narrow region. That they have had some successes I do not deny. They have devised a number of means, surgical and chemical, to allay the local irritation. They have learned how to deal with the secondary infections, formerly so unpleasant. They have even, with their vaccines, managed to cut down the local vulnerability of a minority of patients. But they have no more disposed of the underlying disease, whatever it may be, than one disposes of a black eye by painting it pink. They have simply fought and conquered a few of its outlying symptoms—symptoms sometimes very unpleasant, and hence worth conquering, but by no means identical and coextensive with the disease itself. A man might pass through a whole autumn without sneezing once, and yet have hay-fever—aye, have it so badly that he would be almost incapacitated. He might be immune against every conceivable pollen and every conceivable protein, and still wish he were dead. In brief, the disease is much more complex than its superficial symptoms, and much more profound, and, I am convinced, much more serious. It indicates a faulty adaptation to the *milieu* in which the patient finds himself, and that faulty adaptation is probably just as costly to him as it would be for him to parade Paris singing “Die Wacht am Rhein” or to tour California advocating honest justice and free speech. He is somehow out of joint. He belongs somewhere else. For some profound and mysterious reason, hitherto unraveled by the pathologists, he simply cannot live comfortably amid the scenes in which Providence has set him.

My own notion, born of assiduous and painful observation in my own case, is that climate has a great deal more to do with the matter than pollens. And when I speak of climate I mean specifically temperature, relative humidity and atmospheric pressure. I believe that a victim of hay-fever is simply a man, otherwise healthy, who finds himself in a place where the temperature in summer is too high for him, or the air is too damp, or the atmospheric pressure is too heavy, or all three attack him in combination. The first result is a vaso-motor disturbance which reveals itself in a general feeling of relaxation and ill-being. The second result is a gradual departure from normalcy in his mucous membranes—a departure in the direction of congestion and flabbiness. The third result is a great rise in their vulnerability, so that irritants which formerly disturbed them scarcely at all now assault them severely. The nature of those irritants, I am convinced, is a matter of only secondary importance. To most victims in the United States, the pollen of the rag-weed is most annoying, but that is simply because it is more plentiful than any other irritant at the end of summer, and because its structure makes it unusually abrasive, and because its chemical contents, absorbed by the mucosa, are very poisonous. Any other irritant, given a sufficient supply of it, is just as bad. I have been set to violent sneezing by the dust arising from old books, and by coal dust, and by talcum powder, all of them inert. The essential thing is not the presence of an irritant; it is the presence of vulnerability.

That the vulnerability is chiefly, if not wholly, due to heat, humidity and air pressure is shown by the way that it may be shaken off by evading these causes, or even by evading one or two of them. It was long ago observed that most hay-fever sufferers could get relief by going into the high mountains, or by taking to the open ocean. It seems to be less noted in the literature that they also get relief whenever there is a sudden and considerable drop in temperature at

home. To argue that this drop in temperature drives the pollen out of the air is absurd. It does nothing of the sort; it simply increases the resistance of the patient. His mucosa, hitherto abnormally susceptible to irritation of all sorts, and particularly to combinations of mechanical and chemical irritation, is now as disvulnerable as a normal man's, and he finds himself cured of hay-fever overnight.

The pathologists thus waste their time when they devote it to combatting pollens; worse, they run some risk of doing the patient serious damage with their often empirical and unscientific vaccines. They should abandon all this superficial toying with symptoms, as they have already begun to abandon surgical attacks upon the mucosa, and give their attention to the underlying vaso-motor disturbance. It may be that it is incurable—that no way will ever be found to make a man designed by God for a high and dry climate function normally in a low and damp one. But I doubt it. I believe that as knowledge of the mechanical and chemical workings of the body increases—and it is increasing at present very rapidly—means will be found to correct such deficiencies in adaptation. I shall begin to believe that specialists in hay-fever have become truly scientific when I hear that they have begun to work in that direction.

II

THE prevailing tone of "My Diaries," by Wilfrid Scawen Blunt (*Knopf*), is that of failure—failure certainly far from ignominious, but none the less failure. Blunt, who is now a very old man, has devoted himself since his earliest youth to denouncing and opposing what he calls imperialism, *i. e.*, the enslavement and exploitation of weak nations by the traders and usurers of strong nations. That sort of imperialism, of which England and the United States are the chief contemporary exponents, differs very materially from the land-lust which moved great peoples

in past ages, and even more from the dynastic ambitions which moved Frederick the Great in his day, and Napoleon I in his, and the Hapsburgs in our own time. No adventurousness is in it, and no idealistic frenzy; it is even devoid of the universal and perhaps venial human yearning "to make a noise in the world." The aim of the United States in blackjacking such weak peoples as the Haitians, the Dominicans and the Nicaraguans, like the aim of the English in blackjacking the Egyptians and the Boers, is simply to wring a profit out of them, to steal their birthright, to make economic serfs of them, to reduce them to fodder for profiteers. To liken "expansion" of that sordid and cowardly sort to the great movement of Americans into the West a hundred years ago is to liken the aspirations of a stock-broker to those of a Columbus. The American pioneers took far more into that Western waste than they found there; the tasks that they faced were hazardous and romantic; the leaders among them were the bravest, and sometimes even the noblest. But in robbing and butchering the Haitians there are no hazards whatever, and no romance. It is simply a case of standing behind a wall of concrete, armed with machine-guns, and slaughtering unarmed men, women and children. The motive is that of a yeggman. The Haitians, properly dragooned, can be hitched to usurious "loans," as the Dominicans have been hitched, and made to pay interest on those "loans" for all eternity. No honest American will get any benefit out of the business. All of the profit will go to a small group of swindling bankers.

Blunt saw clearly, fifty years ago, that the English advance in Egypt, Central Asia, the Persian Gulf region and South Africa was just such an enterprise of brigands and slave-traders—that it met no intelligible need of the English people, and gave no sort of salubrious exercise to their traditional qualities. Known in modern history as a folk devoted passionately to human liberty, they were here devoting them-

selves to destroying the liberty of nations too weak to resist them. Full of pride in their adventurousness, their courage, their soldierly sportsmanship and tolerance, they were here engaged in a business that was wholly cowardly and infamous. Against it Blunt raised his voice, loudly and bravely. He belonged to the old landed gentry; the Elizabethan tradition was yet alive in him; all his instincts stood against the low aspirations of traders and gamblers. For fifty years he protested; for fifty years he tried to shame the public conscience into revolt. Then at last, an old man, he put up his pen and abandoned the fight. He was beaten, and very badly. The old English spirit of courage and fair play was dead. England's destinies were no longer directed by her gentlemen, but by her men of business—perhaps the most sordid, grasping, unconscionable men of business ever heard of in the world. The empire had become a mere trading corporation, and the army and navy no more than a colossal police to round up customers for bagmen. The great men of the age were such sweaters as Rhodes and Cromer; its heroes were soldiers who turned artillery upon savages armed with bows and arrows.

Such noble fellows now rule all the principal nations of the world, and the lesser peoples sweat in their slave-pens. The late war, ostensibly waged on the Allied side in defense of liberty, greatly strengthened their hold upon governments everywhere, and brought in what history will undoubtedly call their Golden Age. On both sides in that great conflict there were classes that offered them serious challenge: the surviving gentry in England and the German Junkers. Each of these classes was decimated and reduced to impotence by the war. In England the gentry have lost even the semblance of power; both Lords and Commons are dominated by upstart cads. In Germany the Junkers, vastly reduced in numbers and wealth, are hemmed in on the one side by the great commercial and financial magnates, most of them from

the ghetto and the gutter, and on the other side by a proletariat drunk with a delusion of power. This delusion will gradually fade, as it has begun to fade in England, France and the United States, and as it will presently fade even in Russia. Democracy becomes indistinguishable from a wholesale victimization of democrats. They are fed a part of the spoils, and made to feel prosperous and powerful, and then the spoils are snatched away from them, and they are worse off than they were before. This is precisely what happened in the United States between 1917 and 1921. The commercial-financial oligarchy ran the war in all departments, from the supplying of the army to the management of the Red Cross. It made immense profits—profits so great, indeed, that the populace began to be restive. Then it got peace for itself by throwing bones to labor. For a year or two the workingman was richer than he had ever been before. He got enormous wages. He bought phonographs and silk shirts. He subscribed for Liberty Bonds. Finally, when he had grown fat enough, he was deftly emptied of his gains. Today he has lost all his Liberty Bonds and most of his other savings, his silk shirts have worn out, his phonograph has broken down, and he is getting wages that barely afford him a living. The cost of the war has been converted into a mortgage upon the labor of the whole American people for the next two or three generations. That mortgage is held by the same minority of *entrepreneurs* that gets all the profit out of the exploitation and enslavement of the little republics to the southward.

Blunt attempted to halt the process in England by awakening what he liked to think of as the public conscience. He discovered to his dismay—to such dismay that he never had the resolution to put it into plain terms—that no such public conscience existed. The great masses of men, in fact, are too primitive ethically to see anything immoral in the business, just as they are too primitive intellectually to see how it works against

their own interest. When they rise against it, it is not to demand the setting up of a more honest and honorable system, but simply to demand a larger share of the swag. Organized labor, at least in the United States, has absolutely no other purpose. If, by any magic of accountancy, coal miners could be paid \$25 a day for two hours' work, they would consent eagerly to the enslavement of all other varieties of working men. Nor does any intelligible scheme of reform appear in what is commonly called Bolshevism; it is, even in theory, no more than the substitution of a new set of exploiters for those now in power. The Socialists of the old school are still worse. What they propose is to get rid of the present masters of Christendom, who are dishonest but extremely competent, and give their places to politicians, who are both dishonest and incompetent. The truth is, of course, that no remedy that shows any sign of curing the disease has ever been thought of. So long as civilized society is organized in such a manner that it needs enormously complex and costly agencies to function at all—steamship and railway lines, huge central plants for the preparation of food-stuffs, and so on—it will be unable to get along without the use of large aggregations of capital, and so long as large aggregations of capital are of such critical importance the men who control them will also control the whole life of the world. The one way out is the way of disintegration and new growth. If western civilization ever collapses as Rome collapsed, and the bonds that now bind capitalistic society together are loosed and destroyed, then it may be possible to wipe the slate and make a new start. But not before. The sure cures that believing minds give credit to today are all the products of quacks.

Personally, I see absolutely no sign that capitalistic civilization is near collapse, or, indeed, any sign that it will ever collapse. It is not only strong intrinsically; it has the advantage of facing an opposition that is incompetent,

ignorant and weak. Particularly under democracy it enjoys a great security, for under democracy, which is chiefly founded upon envy and hatred, there is nothing easier than setting one group of victims against another, and so breaking the strength of both. Immediately after the war this exploit was performed on a large scale in the United States. The danger that then confronted capitalism was that the returning conscripts, their wrath aroused by the rough manner in which they had been forced into the Army against their will and by the now obvious dishonesty of the programme for which they had fought, would demand an accounting from their exploiters. But this danger was very quickly disposed of, and by the simple device of turning the ire of the soldiers against those of their own class who had escaped, to wit, the small group of draft-dodgers and conscientious objectors and the larger group of political radicals, who were represented to be slackers in theory if not in fact. Thus one group of victims was set upon the other, and the fact that both had a grievance against their joint exploiters was concealed and forgotten. I know of nothing more indicative of the strength of the capitalistic system than this exploit. It succeeded admirably, and it deserved to succeed, for it was managed intelligently and it was based upon an accurate understanding of democratic psychology.

I believe that every other emergency that is likely to arise, at least in the United States, will be dealt with in the same adroit and effective manner. The capitalistic system, indeed, now enlists the best brains that the United States produces, and it is idle to pretend otherwise. Obvious forces have worked to that end. Under democracy only material success, or, at all events, only success that is translatable into material terms, is genuinely esteemed. An aristocratic society may hold that a man of learning or a soldier is superior to a rich manufacturer or banker, but in a democratic society the latter are put higher, if only because their achievement

is more comprehensible to the democrat, and he can more easily imagine himself reaching it. Thus the imponderable but powerful force of public opinion directs the aspirations of all the more alert and ambitious young men toward business, and what is so assiduously practised tends to produce genuine experts. If, despite this concentration upon one enterprise, the United States fails to bring forth bankers and business men who are the clear superiors of their colleagues in Europe, then it is only because the general average of competence in America is lower. Within their own country Americans attain to a relatively high efficiency in both avocations, and it must be obvious that E. W. Howe is quite right when he argues that the average American banker or business man, whatever his actual demerits, is at least more competent than the average American statesman, musician, painter, author, politician, labor leader or scholar. Think of the best American poet of our time, and then ask yourself if his rank among poets generally is seriously to be compared with the rank of the late J. Pierpont Morgan among financial manipulators or that of John D. Rockefeller among traders.

With most of the brains of the country on its side, and practically all of the enterprise and resolution, capitalism thus seems to me to be absolutely secure in the United States. In England it may come upon evil times when the Empire begins to break up; in France it may commit suicide by unintelligent overreaching; in Germany it may be squeezed to death eventually between the opposing forces of the monarchy and the mob; in Italy, Spain and most of the rest of Europe it appears to lack intelligence. But in the United States it faces none of these dangers, not even that of overreaching. The populace here can stand a great deal more squeezing than it has ever suffered in the past. Despite the swift turning of the screw during the late war, it is still incomparably richer than the populace of any other civilized country. Before the mortgage lying upon its labor is one-

half as onerous as the mortgages lying upon the plain people of France and Germany it will be able to muddle through another war, and maybe even two or three wars. Meanwhile, the machinery for insuring its docility is perfected far more rapidly than its discontent accumulates. All the agencies of demagoguery are controlled by capital, from the press to the courts and legislatures and from the pulpit to the central organs of the labor movement. So long as labor follows such leaders as Gompers there is not the slightest danger that capitalism will ever have to meet an assault really formidable. A few bones discreetly cast, and the dog ceases to growl. And organized labor, it must not be forgotten, constitutes but a small part of American labor in general. The rest of the slaves are utterly helpless: they are not even allowed to protest.

I make the usual disclaimer of moral indignation, which remains, as heretofore, foreign to my nature. I do not admire usurers and exploiters, but that is not because they swindle idiots; it is because they commonly do it in a boulderish manner, without grace or courage. They are not grand and gaudy enough for my taste, at least in America; they lack all sense of romance. Who could admire such an old pirate as John D. Rockefeller whole-heartedly, and yet remember that he is a Baptist? But that, after all, is a merely æsthetic caveat, and perhaps unmanly. My personal interests, in general, are on the side of John; not on the side of his enemies. If he were thrown overboard by an outraged populace tomorrow, the last, far-flung ripples would wash some money out of my own pocket, and with it some of my security. I enjoy being at ease in Zion, even when Zion is decorated with tarletan bunting. My sympathy for those who are ill-used is never powerful enough to make me forget my solicitude for myself.

III

Two novels of experiment: "Narcissus," by Evelyn Scott (*Harcourt*), and

"City Block," by Waldo Frank (*Liveright*). Both leave me cold. The Frank *opus*, in fact, seems to me to be simply a chaos of ill-coordinated impressions—a piece that really says very little, despite an obvious striving to say much and a long exposition of purpose at the end. Frank here fails at the first business of a novelist: he doesn't make his story interesting. Mrs. Scott avoids that primary fault in "Narcissus," but she adds so many others that the book falls a great deal short of "The Narrow House." The central trouble with it is that the characters lack rotundity, and hence reality; they seem to be cut out of cardboard and colored in the pale, clammy manner of Puvis de Chavannes. They are decorations, not human beings. Nothing they do has any plausibility, not even Laurence Farley's weak condoning of his wife's adulteries. Perhaps this sense of their unreality is largely due to the extraordinarily stiff and nonsensical speeches that Mrs. Scott puts into their mouths. Says Charles Hurst, a business man: "Confound these social amenities! I thought you were going to be my mother-confessor, Miss Julia!" Again: "I can furnish the requisite of silence, but I'm afraid it requires some peculiar psychic influence to attract fish." Says Farley to his wife's first lover: "I'm too factual in my approach to follow the ebullitions of the modern consciousness." Nor is all of this stiff, school-marmish stuff in the dialogue; Mrs. Scott writes a lot of it in her own person. A poor novel, indeed. A vast disappointment after the sharp realism of "The Narrow House."

James Branch Cabell's "Gallantry" (*McBride*) needs no bush. As always

with Cabell, the new edition shows a number of deft and subtle improvements. To it is added an excellent introduction by Louis Untermeyer—new proof of what I have often maintained: that Untermeyer is far too competent as a critic to be wasting his time writing poetry. Which brings me to Aldous Huxley's "Mortal Coils" (*Doran*), and more entertainment of the first order. One of the five pieces composing the volume, a fantastic play called "Permutations Among the Nightingales," was printed in *THE SMART SET* a year or two ago. Another, a superb short story called "Nuns at Luncheon," would have got into these pages also if it had not been for the Comstocks. Since the manuscript paid its visit to this office Huxley has denaturized it a bit, and, rather strangely, greatly improved it. It is, as it stands, a truly excellent short story—sparing in words, but extremely vivid and ingenious. Two others in the quintet are quite as good: "The Gioconda Smile" and "The Tillotson Banquet." The fifth, "Green Tunnels," I like a great deal less. But what would you? Here is a man who prints a book of which four-fifths is capital stuff—novel in content, bold in handling, and superbly written. This Huxley I have much confidence in. He keeps himself clear of the bow-wow manner. He has fine humor and a crackling wit. He writes a pellucid and colorful English. He has novel and amusing ideas. No more genuine original has emerged from the fogs of London for years. Go get all of his books and enjoy yourself in a civilized manner: "Limbo," "Chrome Yellow," "Leda" and "Mortal Coils."

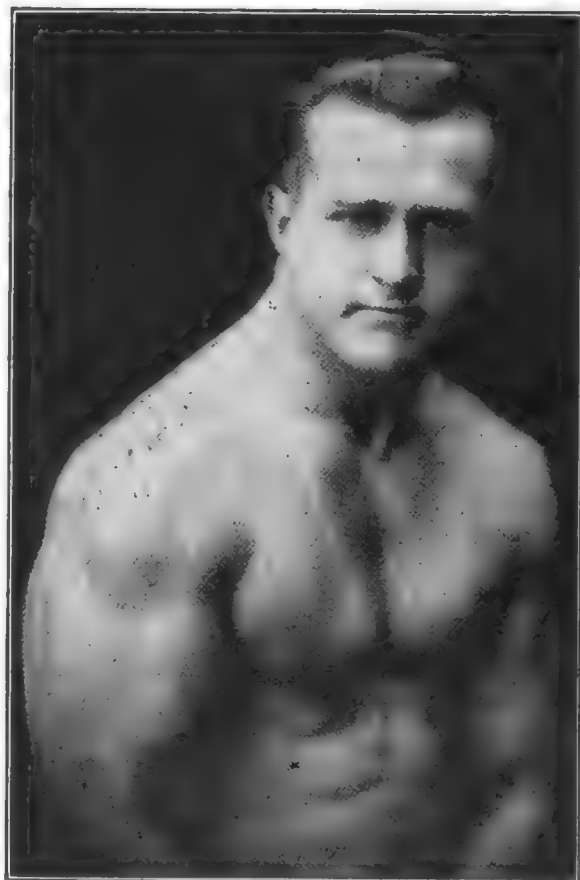


If You Were Dying To-night

and I offered you something that would give you ten years more to live, would you take it? You'd grab it. Well fellows, I've got it, but don't wait till you're dying or it won't do you a bit of good. It will then be too late. Right now is the time. To-morrow, or any day, some disease will get you and if you have not equipped yourself to fight it off, you're gone. I don't claim to cure disease. I am not a medical doctor, but I'll put you in such condition that the doctor will starve to death waiting for you to take sick. Can you imagine a mosquito trying to bite a brick wall? A fine chance.

A Re-Built Man

I like to get the weak ones. I delight in getting hold of a man who has been turned down as hopeless by others. It's easy enough to finish a task that's more than half done. But give me the weak, sickly chap and watch him grow stronger. That's what I like. It's fun to me because I know I can do it and I like to give the other fellow the laugh. I don't just give you a veneer of muscle that looks good to others. I work on you both inside and out. I not only put big, massive arms and legs on you, but I build up those inner muscles that surround your vital organs. The kind that give you real pep and energy, the kind that fire you with ambition and the courage to tackle anything set before you.



Earle E. Liederman as he is to-day

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A Real Man

When I'm through with you, you're a real man. The kind that can prove it. You will be able to do things that you had thought impossible. And the beauty of it is you keep on going. Your deep full chest breathes in rich pure air, stimulating your blood and making you just bubbly over with vim and vitality. Your huge, square shoulders and your massive muscular arms have that craving for the exercise of a regular he man. You have the flash to your eye and the pep to your step that will make you admired and sought after in both the business and social world.

This is no idle prattle, fellows. If you doubt me, make me prove it. Go ahead. I like it. I have already done this for thousands of others and my records are unchallenged. What I have done for them, I will do for you. Come then, for time flies and every day counts. Let this very day be the beginning of new life to you.

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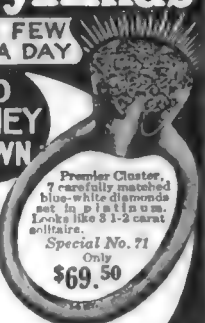
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That is all it will cost you. And you lose your excess flesh through a wonderful new discovery which does not require any starving, exercise, massage, drugs or bitter self-denials or discomforts. Sent on 10 DAYS' TRIAL to PROVE that you can lose a pound a day.

THOUSANDS of men and women, once fat and flabby, low in endurance and weak, are today back to their normal weight, feeling vigorous, healthy and happy. A new scientific discovery now makes it possible for you to lose as much or as little weight as you wish.

The rate at which you lose your surplus flesh is absolutely under your own control. If you do not wish to lose flesh as rapidly as a pound a day, you can regulate this natural law so that your loss of flesh will be more gradual. When you have reached your normal weight you can retain it without gaining or losing another pound.

Taking off excess weight by this new method is the easiest thing imaginable. It is absolutely harmless. Almost like magic it brings slender, graceful, supple figures and the most wonderful benefits in health. Weakness, nervousness, indigestion, shortness of breath, as well as many long-seated organic troubles, are banished. Eyes become brighter, steps more elastic and skins smooth, clear and radiant.

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Scientists have always realized that there was some natural law on which the whole system of weight control was based. But it remained for Eugene Christian, the world-famous food specialist, to discover the one safe, certain and easily-followed method of regaining normal, healthful weight. He discovered that certain foods when eaten together take off weight instead of adding to it. Certain combinations cause fat, others consume fat. For instance, if you eat certain foods at the same meal they are converted into excess fat. But eat these same foods at different times and they will be converted into blood and muscle. Then the excess fat you already have is used up. There is nothing complicated and nothing hard to

understand. It is simply a matter of learning how to combine your food properly, and this is easily done.

This method even permits you to eat many delicious foods which you may now be denying yourself. For you can arrange your meals so that these delicacies will no longer be fattening.

10 Days Trial Send No Money

Eugene Christian has incorporated his remarkable secret of weight control into a course called "Weight Control—The Basis of Health." To make it possible for every one to profit by his discovery, he offers to send the complete course on 10 days trial to anyone sending in the coupon.

If you act quickly you can take advantage of a special reduced price offer that is being made for a short time only. All you need do is to mail the coupon, without sending a penny, and the course will be sent you at once, IN PLAIN WRAPPER.

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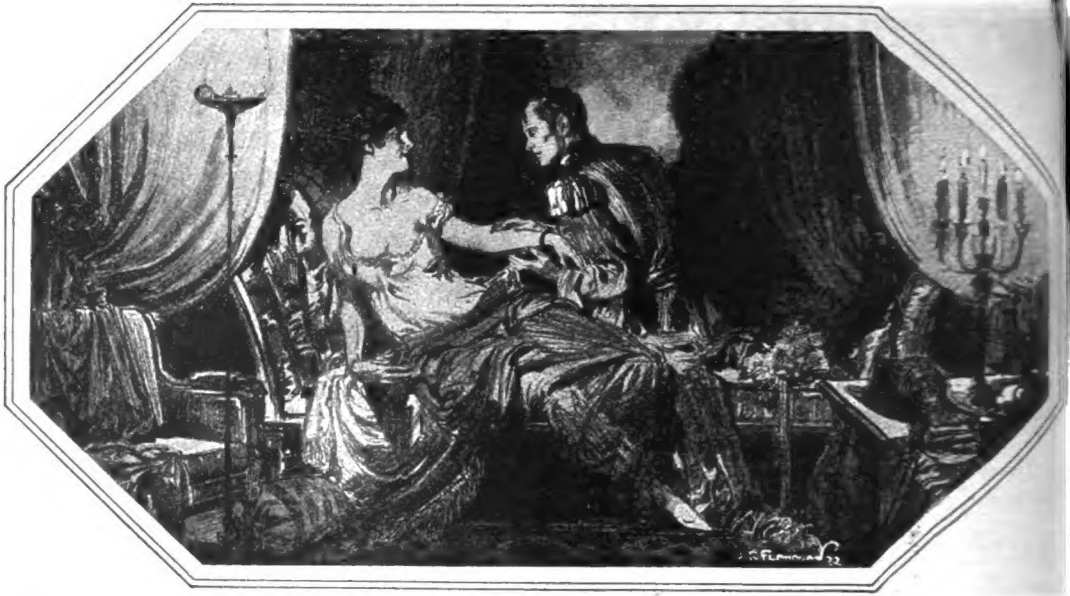
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How the Shape of My Nose Delayed Success

By EDITH NELSON

I HAD tried so long to get into the movies. My Dramatic Course had been completed and I was ready to pursue my ambitions. But each director had turned me away because of the shape of my nose. Each told me I had beautiful eyes, mouth and hair and would photograph well—but my nose was a "pug" nose—and they were seeking beauty. Again and again I met the same fate. I began to analyze myself. I had personality and charm. I had friends. I was fairly well educated, and I had spent ten months studying Dramatic Art. In amateur theatricals my work was commended, and I just knew that I could succeed in motion pictures if only given an opportunity. I began to wonder why I could not secure employment as hundreds of other girls were doing.

FINALLY, late one afternoon, after another "disappointment," I stopped to watch a studio photographer who was taking some still pictures of Miss B—, a well-known star. Extreme care was taken in arranging the desired poses. "Look up, and over there," said the photographer, pointing to an object at my right, "a profile—." "Oh, yes, yes," said Miss B—, instantly following the suggestion by assuming a pose in which she looked more charming than ever. I watched, I wondered, the camera clicked. As Miss B— walked away, I carefully studied her features, her lips, her eyes, her nose—. "She has the most beautiful nose I have ever seen," I said, half audibly. "Yes, but I remember," said Miss B—'s maid, who was standing near me, "when she had a 'pug' nose, and she was only an extra girl, but look at her now. How beautiful she is."

IN a flash my hopes soared. I pressed my new-made acquaintance for further comment. Gradually the story was unfolded to me. Miss B— had had her nose reshaped—yes, actually corrected—actually made over, and how wonderful, how beautiful it was now. This change perhaps had been the turning point in her career! It must also be the way of my success! "How did she accomplish it?" I asked feverishly of my friend. I was informed that M. Trilety, a face specialist of Binghamton, New York, had accomplished this for Miss B— in the privacy of her home!

I THANKED my informant and turned back to my home, determined that the means of overcoming the obstacle that had hindered my progress was now open for me. I was bubbling over with hope and joy. I lost no time in writing M. Trilety for information. I received full particulars. The treatment was so simple, the cost so reasonable, that I decided to purchase it at once. I did. I could hardly wait to begin treatment. At last it arrived. To make my story short—in five weeks my nose was corrected and I easily secured a regular position with a producing company. I am now climbing fast—and I am happy.

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and does not interfere with one's daily occupation, being worn at night.

CLIP the coupon below, insert your name and address plainly, and send it today to M. Trilety, Binghamton, N. Y., for the free booklet which tells you how to correct ill-shaped noses. Your money refunded if you are not satisfied, is his guaranty.

M. TRILETY,
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Dear Sir: Please send me without obligation your booklet which tells how to correct ill-shaped noses.

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IF your skin is of the pale, sallow type it needs the treatment given on page 6 of the booklet wrapped around each cake of Woodbury's Facial Soap.

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